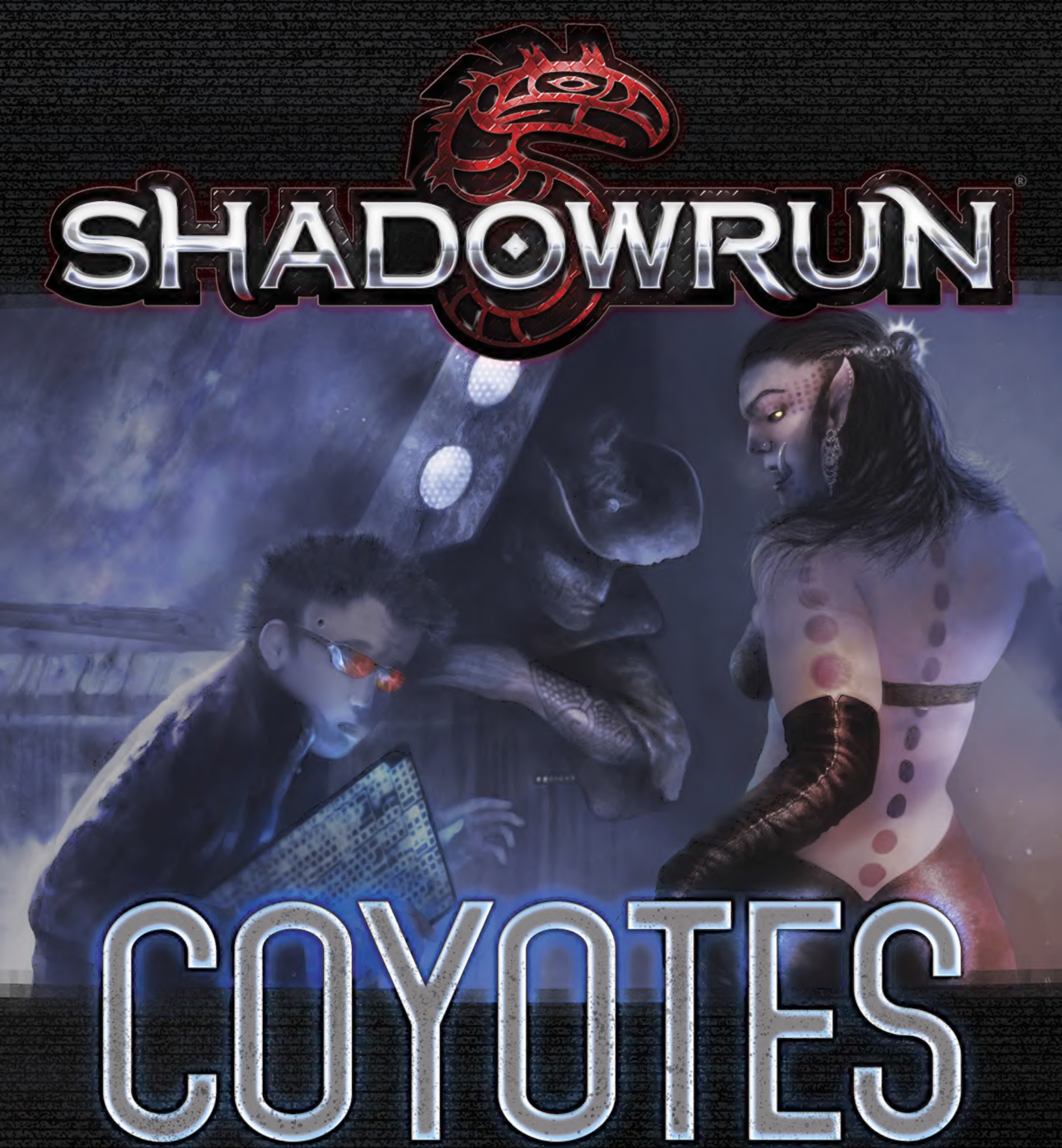
SHADOWRUN®



COYOTES

CATALYST game labs™

© 2013 The Topps Company, Inc. All Rights Reserved. Shadowrun and Matrix are registered trademarks and/or trademarks of The Topps Company, Inc., in the United States and/or other countries. Catalyst Game Labs and the Catalyst Game Labs logo are trademarks of InMediaRes Productions, LLC.

CREDITS

Writing: Grant Robinson
Art: Erich Schreiner, Jason Behnke
Layout: Matt Heerdt
Shadowrun Line Developer: Jason M. Hardy
Development: Peter M. Andrew, Jr.
Art Direction: Brent Evans, Kat Hardy
Author's Dedication: For Katie and Douglas
Proofing: Patrick Goodman

JACKPOINT

CONNECTING TO JACKPOINT VPN...
...IDENTITY SPOOFED
...ENCRYPTION KEYS GENERATED
...CONNECTED TO ONION ROUTERS
›››LOGIN: XXXXXXXXXXXXXX
›››ENTER PASSCODE: XXXXXXXXXXXXXX
...BIOMETRIC SCAN CONFIRMED
CONNECTED TO ‹*ERROR: NODE UNKNOWN*›

"SOMETIMES IT'S BETTER TO BE SOUTH OF THE BORDER."

JACKPOINT STATS
7 Users are active on the network

LATEST NEWS
I found someone to give us a perspective on the transporters we all consider part of the background. Be nice to the coyote, he does have teeth—Bull

PERSONAL ALERTS
- You have **68 new** private messages.
- You have **127 new responses** to your JackPoint posts.
- Devil Rat Attack's **new single** will be available for download in 17 minutes, 9 seconds.

FIRST DEGREE
One Member is online and in your area.

YOUR CURRENT REP SCORE:
1,219
(84% Positive)

CURRENT TIME:
30 Nov 2075,
1113 hrs

WELCOME BACK TO JACKPOINT, CHUMMER:
Your last connection was severed 6 days, 18 hours ago.

TODAY'S HEADS UP
The state of the art is always moving forward, don't get left behind.
[Tag: Shadowrun, Fifth Edition]

INCOMING
- Astral space and the metaplanes will never be the same again. [Tag: Aetherology]
- There are times when travel is bad for your health. [Tag: Firing Line]
- The Smoke will never be the same after someone let loose the hoodlums. [Tag: London Falling]
- Sometimes the shadows clear enough to allow you to see the drek you're standing in. [Tag: Sioux Nation: Shadows in Focus]

TOP NEWS ITEMS
- The Corporate Court has refused to hear the case of Getwell Industries versus Sioux Nation. Link
- Gaeatronics has announced a significant bounty on the head of Michael Rory Caolain, though the award is only collectible if the subject is delivered alive. MET 2000 has forbidden any of their members from collecting the award or assisting others looking to collect it. Link
- UCAS Senate Highway Safety Bill #4896-97 has been shelved until the Senate approves increased remote explosive detection devices along the interstate highway system. Damien Knight publicly supported the decision, as the bill would have required Ares to escort and insure explosive cargoes. Link

TRANSPORTER

Bright overhead lights shined down on the card table; peering around the room, Timothy could barely see the backs of the cards of the other players. A modest pile of credsticks, corporate scrip, and datachips sat in the middle of the table.

He looked at his cards; with the cards on the table, he had a pretty good hand. He rolled a credstick into the middle of the table.

"Call."

At that moment a flashing light in the corner of his vision alerted him to an incoming message. The merest thought brought the message up; there was no way he would be able to concentrate on the rest of the game knowing that someone wanted to get in touch with him. As the player on his left folded, a message crawled across the bottom of his vision:

"Runner team urgently needs to get into the city. Hot cargo. No pursuit. Are you anywhere near Wenatchee?—Pax."

Distracted from the game now, he tapped out a very quick reply on his deck

"Can be in 30 minutes. Number?"

In the meantime the shadowed figure opposite raised. The only other player in the game folded. It was down to the two of them. A good pair, but what did Mendle have? At the moment all he had was a wide grin, but that wasn't anything new. The man always smiled.

"Call. Show 'em."

A flush. Typical. Timothy stood up from the table. "It's all yours."

On the way out of the bar Timothy grabbed his duster and hat from the hook next to the door and stepped out into bright daylight. The sun glared down and reflected off last night's snow, broken and brown where the bar patrons had parked, but clean and white otherwise. Timothy took a second to deeply inhale the mountain air.

Before he could exhale, an incoming call snapped him out of his moment of peace.

"Are you a Coyote? Can you get us into Seattle?"

Strictly amateurs. No greeting, no careful feeling him out, and there was a hitch in the breath of the guy on the other end of the audio call. He sounded nervous.

"Might be that I am. Who's asking?"

"Uh, you don't need to know, but we need to get to Seattle by midnight. Can you do that?"

"Meet me at the corner of Austin Drive and No. 1 Canyon Road in twenty minutes."

That would give him time to check them out before driving the half-kilometer he needed to travel. Amateurs were usually trouble. It was time to make a few calls.

✖

The clients were already at the intersection when Timothy pulled up. Easily the most visible was a bald troll with painted horns, it looked like he had carefully chosen his look. The effect the troll was going for was marred by the shredded ballistic vest he wore, bloody bandages slapped here and there, and the fact that he was lying down and gasping. Red seeped slowly onto the fresh snow, and it looked like he might be going into shock. A short human with a black trenchcoat fidgeted and swayed from side to side as he cradled a deck. His short, carefully sculpted hair and black sunglasses made him look like he wanted to blend in with corporate types. As the van pulled up he clutched his deck to his body and gritted his teeth. The final member of the team was leaning against the old street sign. Dressed for a nightclub, her tight vinyl top and trousers could not have been less suited for a backwater Salish town, but they showed off her impressive and curvaceous ork physique. Lying on their side off the road were three motorcycles, bullet holes riddled the troll-sized one. There must be an impressive story behind how they had got this far.

"I'm Tim. It looks like you folks could do with a ride." The southern drawl was strong, much stronger than it had been while playing poker. "I can fit the three of you no problem, but with a troll we'll only be able to fit two of the bikes in the back, and it might be a bit crowded." Tim patted his van; it was reassuringly cold under his palm. The touch also allowed him to command the van to open the main side door and lower to the ground.

"The name is Huntress." The ork smiled as she came toward him. Timothy could feel his body relaxing when she spoke. "This here is Spike, and over on the grass is Razor." Spike visibly flinched when he heard his name. Razor didn't move, still leaking onto rapidly darkening snow. "Give us a hand getting Razor on board."

Razor was heavy, even for a troll, and his injuries looked like they could end up being fatal. He took up the whole back of the van once he had been dragged into place.

"Razor is going to be pissed when he wakes up, but we'll leave his bike. It's the most shot up anyway." The two other bikes were stacked in front of Razor and secured with straps. Finally the last two got on board, sitting just behind the driver's seat.

"The trip will take four hours. Hope you've stocked up on vids." Tim climbed in the driver's door as the van lifted off the pavement, the door closed, and the windows darkened.

Spike, silent 'til now, thrust himself forward, his face tense and sweaty, "Wait, wait! I forgot something!"

Timothy started the engine, then turned around in his seat to look at Spike, then he just nodded.

"Mind the step," he said as the door opened.

Spike pulled a grenade out of his jacket pocket and threw it out the door. An explosion destroyed Razor's bike and left Timothy's ears ringing, although he could still hear the echoes of the explosion reverberating around the hills.

"There, no evidence trail." Spike looked pleased with himself. Timothy stared at him. "What?" Spike asked.

"I guess we'll take the long way around to avoid the aerial drones you just alerted," Tim said. But Spike didn't seem to hear him; he just sat back with a tight smile. Huntress only shrugged and made sure she was strapped in.

✖

Timothy eased his van to a stop next to the border checkpoint. An old Doberman drone trundled up to the driver's door as a call came through on his commlink

"This border crossing is closed, the road is out ahead. For your safety, please return the way you came and take the route through North Bend." The official Metroplex Guard voice was metallic and harsh. Not at all welcoming.

"Thank you for your concern. If y'all will check the repair schedule, you will find that I am a supply vehicle delivering supplies for the road repair team." For a closed border like this one, there were hardly any checks performed, just a warning message and an instruction to turn around. He had to force the guard to scan his commlink and look over his fake ID.

"Thank you Josephus T. O'Reilly, please confirm with a biometric reading." The Doberman trundled up to the door, and a telescoping arm presented a fingerprint scanner as Timothy pulled on a rubber glove full of fake fingerprints and rolled down his window, letting icy air swirl around the inside of the van. As he pressed his false prints onto the offered plate, he called a friend, who answered as the van rolled along the deserted highway.

"I'm the man with the plan. How's it going Timmo old buddy?" the voice rang directly in Timothy's ear bone, inaudible to the silent passengers.

"Not too bad. I've got some friends traveling with me, but they have been mighty quiet for the trip. I think they have been chatting amongst themselves, and that's mighty rude where I come from. Wondering if you might let me in on their little secrets? One of them is a decker." Timothy's message was transmitted with a subvocal mike; without looking him in the face, Huntress and Spike would be unable to tell he was talking to someone.

"Man, you have called the right guy! You pull the normal jam-scam and I'll pop 'em open for ya. Normal fee applies, though, dude. I gotta brand-new ride to pay off."

"Come in through my satellite link in thirty minutes." Timothy signed off, but not before transmitting instructions on how to get around the jamming he was about to set up.

"Okay back there, we will be traveling through a blackout zone in about ten minutes, so if you want to check your feeds, now is the time." Huntress hit a button on her link.

"What?"

"I said we'll be going someplace the Matrix isn't; make sure you've got a sim or something so you don't get bored."

"Oh, yeah sure." Huntress fiddled with her link; Spike didn't say anything. Hell, he could be totally in the Matrix for all Timothy knew.

Timothy felt under his chair for his jammer. At full power it would cut off any signal to or from his van, except for ones he specifically allowed through. He flicked it on to the minimum setting and set the timer so that it would slowly build over the course of ten minutes.

As the static built up, so did the feeling of isolation. The windshield had been darkened at the start of the journey, and there were no windows in the back. Timothy was driving with only his AR display to help him.

The sound from outside the van changed texture slightly, indicating to Timothy that the van had entered the tunnel as expected. There was movement in the back—it felt like Razor was waking up, and Spike was beginning to move around as well.

"What ... what happened to the signal?"

"You must have been jacked in when I mentioned it, but we've entered some tunnels to get past the real border security. We'll be in them for a while." Timothy carefully examined the reactions of the passenger through the hidden security cameras. Spike had been surprised, then relaxed; he and Huntress were moving their jaws slightly. Obviously Timothy wasn't the only one with a subvocal microphone. Spike just slumped back in his seat, glaring at the back of Timothy's head. "We'll be back in signal range in a bit, just before I drop you off. Speaking of which, the contract that your fixer sent through gave a drop-off point in Redmond. That's a mighty dangerous area of town. You still want to go there?"

"Yeah, that's fine; we have some friends that can pick us up."

A jolt of adrenaline ran through Timothy, amateurs with friends collecting them? He was right to have been cautious. He used the one unjammed frequency to call a friend.

"Howdy. Are you still on for the usual?"

"Already there Tim-bob, figured it would be more subtle if I was already there running on the node. The guy with the 'tude is a pretty good hacker, but he wasn't expecting me. I recorded the convo as well—you want the whole thing or just the highlights?"

"Just the highlights. Their business is their business."

"Looks like their business is offing you. The guy Spike wants to drop a few grenades in your van when they leave. They have buddies at the drop off point as well, don't know who, but probably Yaks, since all his stuff is Mitsuhama. Anyway whoever Huntress is didn't feel like shooting you to start with, but he's convincing her. She'll probably cave just to stop the whining. The Razor dude is totally awake as well, but he's playing dead because Spike said it would be better. For a hacker, the guy is ten shades of crazy. Oh

yeah, Razor doesn't care one way or the other. They will probably try to geek you near the drop-off point."

"Yeah, that would be usual procedure. Thanks for your help, I'll wire you the payment right away in case it doesn't work out the way I want it to."

"Bud, don't you stress it, it'll work out. Peace out."

A check of the cameras showed that Huntress was looking just as bored as she had for the whole trip. She must be an amazing actress to keep up that kind of face. Spike was getting more and more twitchy, looking around constantly. Razor had only moved to roll onto his back and put his hand over his eyes. Timothy checked the time; he probably had twenty minutes or so unless he wanted to circle the block a few times at the other end. Time for one more call.

"Pax."

"I'm real happy to get through to you, Pax. I've got your runners in the back of my van, and we're heading to the drop-off point. But I've got a question for you first." Timothy paused to take a breath. A single van carrying four people for four hours brought with it an aroma that air conditioning can't kill. "Pax, it looks a lot like your lads are fixing to kill the transport. Obviously a professional such as yourself would not be involved in something so foolish. How would you like me to proceed?"

"They would have to be idiots to try it on someone like you. It's no plan of mine. But I have to ask—do you have proof of what you're saying?"

"Yep. Recorded conversation."

"That is ... unfortunate. Okay, I still need the drop off to happen, and I would prefer them alive so they may learn from their mistakes. Do you have a way to make that happen?"

"I can't rightly say, but you see, I've got myself a dilemma. If I let them go now, they'll trash my rep." Timothy checked the cameras; he felt cold talking about eliminating his passengers when they sat no more than two meters behind him. "You see my dilemma."

"Okay, look, I have a good rep—"

"Good?"

"I have a solid rep," Pax insisted. "All you have to do is get them to the meet with their stuff, and I will make sure they don't blab. I'll throw in an extra ten percent to your fee for your troubles."

"Twenty-five percent would cover my costs, along with the probable damage."

Timothy cut the connection. It was ten minutes until they were expected. Showtime.

"Okay back there? No one needs anything? I'm going to have to switch to recycled air for a little while; you guys wouldn't appreciate the smell out there."

No reaction. He didn't expect one. He reached below the seat and toggled a button. At the same time he slipped a breather from under the seat.

As he straightened up, cold metal pressed against the back of his head. Damn.

"Do you have one of those for everyone?" Huntress asked in a husky voice.

"Might be that I do. Here, take this one ..."

As he motioned to hand the mask back, Timothy mentally commanded the van to brake hard. A hundred kilos of ork cannoned into the back, while Tim desperately tried to hold his breath. The wheels squealed and the whole van skidded forward, lurching as Razor and the bikes strained against their restraints. A buzzing orange alert informed him that a hacker had been detected by the van. In less than a second the alarm stopped and reported all clear. Spike was in control of the van, but that wouldn't matter in about three seconds. Huntress' weight crushed down on Timothy, grinding him into the seat with her dead weight. He managed to get the breather to his face while bright sparks danced in front of him. The edges of his vision were going dark.

He released his restraints and slid the ork to the floor. As he looked around the compartment at the three shadowrunners, he thanked his lucky stars that he had never hooked the knockout gas to the van's computer. He slipped into the driver's seat. That was a lot closer than he liked. Spike was a waste of space, but Razor and Huntress seemed like they could develop into real professionals.

✖

"Pax, your cargo has been delivered, and I have confirmed your payment. Thank you for the business, feel free to contact me if you have different shadowrunners you need to transport. Your cargo has been laid out, unconscious but alive, at a loading dock next to the designated drop off point." It had been tempting to take Spike's deck and go through the pockets of everyone while they were out, but it would have cost more in the long run with the loss of reputation.

It had been a hassle, but it was done. Time to slip out of his cold metal vehicle and into a cold mug of something strong.

THE COYOTE LIFE

POSTED BY: TIMOTHY MOVO

So why would someone like you or me ever get involved in smuggling people across borders? Seriously, it seems foolish, and maybe we are fools. I know a lot of Coyotes. Even though we're competitors, we keep in touch with each other, mostly so that we know who is likely to try to stiff us on a fee, but also because there aren't many other people that we can talk to about what we do.

One surprising thing I've learned is that there are a fair number of Coyotes who aren't smuggling people across borders because they need the money. Oh, if you ask them they will say they are saving up for retirement, and they want to get out of the business someday, but they're probably not even fooling themselves. Plenty of times I've seen a Coyote get a choice job, earn enough with one high-risk run to retire, and what happens? You see them in a bar the following week with a new deck, fresh scars from an implanted rig and a pimped-out van in the parking lot. Buy any Coyote a beer and he'll tell you that his last job was pretty hairy, and then he'll talk about what they just bought so they'll be safer next time.

Having said that, there are people who get into the business thinking it's going to make them rich beyond their wildest dreams. They figure they'll make a fast run through some back alleys and Matrix dead zones, then some high-profile shadowrunners or corp managers or politicians or whatever will shower them with gold credsticks and teach them the secret handshakes to get into the exclusive clubs. I don't know what other Coyotes call these fellas, but I call them greenhorns. And the death rate among greenhorns is high.

For me, the only advantage I had when I started out was that I found out through the rumor mill that there were two gangs who thought that a particular set of alleyways was a part of the other gang's territory. The alleys were on long enough to get someone deep into the heart of the Redmond Barrens without being seen by either side, or by the cops. It was pretty sweet. I heard about someone who needed to get in, let them know I was available, and asked for money. It was a pretty sweet setup. I did that a couple of times and got greenhorn cocky, which meant it wasn't long before someone asked me to get them in, and I got them in, and then they shot me, leaving me for dead on the streets of the Barrens. I crawled into a hole to plug the bleeding until a friend could come pick me up. Right there I learned a lot of what I needed to survive as a Coyote, especially the part about having a good friend who can pull your hoop out of the fire. I wasn't even mad that there was a new kid in town who was working my old route, mostly because the gangs caught on about an unclaimed alleyway and had a bloodbath trying to claim it, just as the guy who stiffed me was taking someone through. Learning from someone else's mistake is a good way to stay alive.

THE RISKS

See, the reasons that greenhorns die is they think the people they are transporting value them. That's only partially correct. They value a Coyote's ability to get them across a border, but once the job's done, our value drops precipitously. When a criminal needs to escape a lockdown in Kowloon, or when she has to get out of Aztlan fast, the Coyote who takes them across that border is a loose end. Burning away at the back of the client's head is the thought that for enough nuyen, a Coyote will go back to whoever is chasing them and let them know where they were dropped off. I can't blame them too much for that—it's the way criminals think.

What this means is that having your cargo turn on you is a real risk, especially the heavily armed shadowrunner types. Inexperienced shadowrunners are the worst—they're twitchy, and they often haven't figured out the importance of making and keeping good contacts.

So the risks are there, but there are a few precautions that you can take. Building up a rep for delivering on what you say you are going to do is one way to relax your cargo. It's foolish not to take security precautions in your van, but it's just as foolish to make those precautions obvious. You gotta be discreet. Building tear gas or even explosives into the seats of your vehicle will do you a lot more good than mounting guns in the ceiling so that passengers are perpetually staring down a loaded barrel. People with guns pointed at them tend to get edgy, and that can make them unpredictable.

- Hold up. "Cargo"? I can guarantee that no Coyote that I've ever used has referred to me that way, and you can bet that I'm not going to ride in a van that has a gun pointed at me.
- Sticks

- You're saying that you trust everyone that you work with? This guy is just talking about the same precautions that you take when running with someone you don't know, only he rides with fresh faces more than you gun with them.
- Whippit

- Shut up, noob.
- Sticks

Having a network is important. Most successful Coyotes also have friends who will check on them, friends who know which fixer set you up with your clients, and who will check in if you haven't been seen in a while. The Matrix is a godsend for sending a little location-based heartbeat to a hacker friend, especially if that friend can send CrashCart to your last known location if your signal disappears.

Along with the physical danger from your customers, there are the normal business risks as well; competition for plum routes is intense, and more than one Coyote has been taken out by a competitor in a hail of bullets. Coyotes make

their living from their rep and are therefore more susceptible to smear campaigns than most shadow operatives, which means we sometimes reach out for a little public relations help. I can't think of any of the old hands who don't have a face they can call on when they need a favor.

The way I see it, if passengers are determined to turn on a Coyote, there are three ways that the Coyote can come out of the situation alive: he can kill the passengers and dump the bodies somewhere, he can eject and hope for the best, or he can try to do something nonlethal. Killing customers is usually bad news, but leaving them alive and stranded can be trouble too, because once they make it back to civilization they'll try to smear your good name. There is no easy option; all you can really do is build a good enough rep that it can take a few knocks when things go down the crapper.

Even if your competitors and cargo don't cut your saddle-strap, there's yet another problem waiting for you—the law. Lone Star hates Coyotes almost as much as they hate shadowrunners. Coyotes annoy them because we're so gifted at shuttling evidence and suspects out of their reach. The Star and Knight Errants might not go out of their way to hunt us down like they would shadowrunners, because the higher-profile crime a of runners have a way of pissing off their corp masters and drawing the attention of law enforcement. You should be pro-active here—make a friend in law enforcement who might be able to run interference for you.

- "Friend" is probably the wrong word here. "Acquaintance willing to accept a bribe" is a more accurate term.
- Traveler Jones

I've spotted all of these on the trail, but the thing that has hurt me the most has been what y'all might call entropy. Couple of months back I had a cakewalk screwed up because one of the buildings on my normal route installed new cameras outside their door. Not usually a big deal, but they had active surveillance thrown into the package, and the cameras came with a feed to a security corporation that managed to identify the ruthenium polymers on my vehicle. They're not illegal, but it's enough to flag my vehicle as suspicious and get it tagged by a traffic drone, which I noticed had happened when I changed my Matrix ID. That was all I needed to break out my emergency maneuvers. I jettisoned the cargo close to where they wanted to be, took the pursuit myself and wound up torching my vehicle to cover my escape.

That kind of thing might happen on any trip. If you're traveling through the Barrens, gang boundaries will shift. If you're bluffing through a border check, then there will be some new form to fill out. Hell, even road work can mess with a patrol car route. All you can do is hit the ground running and have a couple of backup plans to haul your ass out of the fire.

WHERE THE MONEY COMES FROM

For all the risks, there's plenty of payback. Which is good, because you need plenty of scratch if you're going to buy and maintain all the vehicles you'll need if you want to be good at this.

Like any business, Coyotes charge what the market will bear. Getting a low-risk ganger through someone else's turf might be couple of hundred nuyen. Getting a team of Jaguar Guards into the UCAS sector of Denver might cost a couple hundred thousand. The good part about the job is the clients usually come to a Coyote and ask how much a trip will cost. That gives us a chance to set the price, leaving the client to accept it or look elsewhere. If there's nowhere else for them to go, then the gouging begins. Be careful, though—push the price too high, and the client will decide it's easier to kill you at the end of the job than pay you. No matter how small the market is, that alternative always exists.

I can't speak for all other Coyotes on how we come up with our asking price, but I take a good long look at the person doing the asking. If they have a good rep and aren't too worked up, then the risk of them pulling out the shooting irons is low, and I knock a bit off the price. If it's a rush job, I'll normally need to pay some helpers to get me out of bed, so that jacks up the price. If there is time I'll ask a bit about why they need a Coyote, not specifics of course, but smuggling an illegal focus is much less risky if I'm caught than dragging unwilling kids of corporate high-fliers around town. If they won't say then I assume the worst. Where they need to get to is another factor, if the clients need to be on the other side of town, maybe that's no problem. If they need to get from Chicago to Tír na nÒg, big cost. Border crossings? Additional cost. Warrants for arrests, magic, injured clients, bulky cargo, or more than one troll in my van means I need to spend extra on reinforced suspension, weapons, drugs, and so on. All these things drive up the price. The thing that'll cost you the most, though, is when a customer wants me to do a particular thing, like drive past a specific building, or cut off all Matrix activity for the duration of the ride. If they tell me why, then maybe it's not a problem, but nobody ever does, so I assume that means I'm taking a risk that I don't know about. That costs a lot more.

- Everything about a Coyote is expensive. They're a specialized group, there aren't many of them, and it's tough to get someone without their expertise to get you where you need to be. Like any other monopoly, they use their position to gouge you at will.
- Stone

- Seems fair to me. They're putting themselves out there, taking the risk, so they ought to be paid well for it. But if you want a bargain, look for someone with that extra mad glint in his eye

who is willing to take on an impossible job just for the thrill of attempting it. The fact that you're giving them something interesting to do might be enough to get you a discount.

- Slamm-0!

BORDER CROSSING COSTS

SITUATION	COST
Border crossing	100¥ per individual (200¥ for trolls); 50¥ for every 100 kilos of cargo
For every 100 kilometers traveled outside a sprawl	50¥ for each individual (100¥ for trolls); 25¥ for every 100 kilos of cargo
For every ten kilometers traveled inside a sprawl	10¥ for each individual (20¥ for trolls); 5¥ for every 100 kilos of cargo
Each forbidden weapon or dose of illegal drug (assuming the Coyote notices them)	500¥
Each known active warrant on a passenger	500¥
Evading active law enforcement pursuit	1,000¥
"No questions asked" cargo or personnel	5,000¥
Multipliers for high-risk locations or borders*	1.5x to 10x
Multiplier for easy locations or borders	0.5

**The exact size of the multiplier generally depends on the risk to the Coyote and the consequences of being caught. Smuggling into Seattle from Salish-Shidhe territory could result in a jail term of a year or two, meaning the multiplier would be 1.5, or perhaps no multiplier at all. Smuggling someone out of Aztlan into the CAS is a mandatory death penalty, which would likely bring the 10x multiplier.*

SAMPLE MODIFIERS

DIFFICULTY	MODIFIER
Easy: Redmond on a quiet day, UCAS/CAS border	0.5
Normal: Denver border crossing, crossing the Seattle border	1.0
Elevated: Salish-Shidhe/ Tír Tairngire, Sioux Nation/UCAS	1.5
Significant: Carribean League/ CAS border, China/Hong Kong	2.0
Severe: Bug City, Aztlan/CAS	10.0

Note that the base price calculated with these guidelines may be lowered through a standard Negotiation Test, with each net hit reducing the cost by five percent, to a maximum of twenty percent.

Also be aware that these are guidelines for the gamemaster rather than a fixed cost, and there will be many variables hidden from the players, including the reliability of the Coyote, the likelihood of success of the job, and whether the Coyote thinks the players are likely to betray him.

Making friends with your Coyote will often bring the price down a little. The best way to make friends with a Coyote is to ride with her a few times and not betray her.

Most Coyotes become friendly with some of the shadowrunners they transport, particularly if they transport the same people several times. Shadowrunners who regularly need the help of a Coyote are a valuable commodity, since they pay well and are willing to tell their contacts about the ability of the Coyote they work with, which could possibly leading to higher paying jobs. Perhaps the most important part of having repeat customers is that with every repeat trip it becomes less likely that the passengers will try to kill the Coyote to cover their tracks. When transporting corporate passengers that risk is lower to begin with, but for them it will never go away in the same way that it can for shadowrunners. Call me biased, but true loyalty to anything besides money seems to be beyond the reach of any corp drones. There are some psycho shadowrunners out there, but there are also some I'd trust with my mother's life.

- Mercs need Coyote friends, particularly when flying into a hit zone under the radar. I've been to Bug City, and I needed a Coyote to get me through both the cordon and private security forces. Speaking of that, I wonder how the technomancer I went with is doing; I should pop back and see her.
- Pistons

WHERE THE MONEY GOES

All this talk about money makes it seem like shuffling people around is a ticket to an early retirement on a ranch out West, but it ain't so. For the first couple of years, a lot of Coyotes barely scratch it together.

Hardware is one cost. You're not a Coyote if you aren't moving people and things around, and that means a vehicle of some sort. Your normal van will carry folks around, but it won't keep you safe when the bullets fly, or shoot down a LoneStar drone. So maybe you get a bit of armor welded on by your buddy at the chop shop, but that makes the vehicles sit real low on the road, so you need work done on the suspension. Not just the shocks though—all that armor makes your van heavy, and you can't escape pursuit at fifty kilometers an hour, so you get a few more horses put in that buggy of yours. Now you've spent enough that you don't want to lose it, so put in a few hidden gun ports, a ruthenium coating, changing RFID tags, and a satellite receiver. When you're paying that off you maybe get a big paycheck, so you treat yourself to a vehicle control rig, and it you get that, then you gotta rig the van. It all adds up real quick.

I talk a lot about vans, and fact is they are one of the most common vehicles for Coyotes to ride. And for good reason—they are not obvious like a tank, they can be tricked out, and most importantly they can carry a bunch of people and other cargo. I love my van and couldn't do without her. Other Coyotes use other vehicles; greenhorns

often use sedans, which isn't a bad choice for someone starting out, but your carrying capacity will be limited. Seattle and other port cities often have Coyotes riding speedboats, which is like the van of the sea. The superstars get off the ground and get themselves a t-bird. T-birds are amazing vehicles, but they're very expensive. There are a few t-bird routes into and around the Americas, mostly used by smugglers.

- T-birds are only for high-grade runners doing the kind of ops that might draw military attention. Most runners will never need a ride in one.
- Hauser

- There is a difference between need and want. Who wouldn't want a ride in a t-bird if they can convince Mr. Johnson to spring for it?
- Netcat

- It's not just about luxury. Sometimes you need to travel faster than a van can carry you, so something like a t-bird becomes a necessity.
- Traveler Jones

What is the difference between a smuggler and a Coyote? It's mainly about what you're prepared to carry. Smugglers tend to have plenty of cargo space and few if any extra seats for people who are traveling along, while Coyotes have more passenger space. And it's better equipped, though that doesn't mean you should expect snack service or anything.

But here's one similarity—both of them make money off their reputation. It costs to get a rep, and it costs to keep your rep clean. Paying fixers to set you up meetings with clients is the easy part. You also need to make friends with your mechanic, a hacker, a wizard, and maybe even a law enforcement officer or two. I don't care if you're operating with a t-bird or a bicycle; if fixing your ride is nothing more than a job for your mechanic, then mistakes are going to be made. If it's a job for a friend, then not only will the job be done right, but maybe you'll get a bit of extra thrown into the bargain. When you build the relationships you're going to need, you're making an investment in your future.

There are also costs every time you border-hop. Different borders have different costs. Sometimes, you need some certified credsticks to grease some palms along the way (and you definitely want to use credsticks for this—bribing people through your personal account is not a good idea). Other times, you might need some cheap handguns and ammo to help you skip through enemy territory. If you're going to make your way through some ghoul warrens, you might want to visit your street doc, preferably one with very loose ethics. He might be able to sell you some parts that were destined for the medical waste scrap heap, which can help distract any ghouls that get too close. Then there are the costs involved with hiring a hacker on a temporary basis, someone who can find out local security patrol patterns for you, or who can set up a fake emergency call as a distraction while you do your business.

Hopping across a hot border can be expensive as well. Changing the digital ID of the van is easy—a hacker can do that for beer money—but if you get shot up, or if important electronic components of your vehicle get bricked, you're going to need to put up a fair amount of cred. Make sure you build in possible expenses to your upfront costs—your passengers aren't going to be too sympathetic if you ask for extra cash once the run is done because your vehicle is full of holes.

WHY SHOULD I TRUST SOMEONE POINTING A GUN AT ME?

Yeah, valid question. Just about every Coyote is going to have some sort of way of protecting themselves from their cargo. It might be a turret inside the van, a couple of hidden flashpaks, or just someone who will hire a bounty hunter if the Coyote doesn't turn up. I like to think this is a natural and understandable thing, especially when we are hauling heavily armed shadowrunners, some of whom can be real psychopaths. But if you're a shadow-

TARGETING THE BACK OF THE VAN

Setting up weapons to keep people in the back of the vehicle covered is a reasonably simple task, though it's one shadowrunners don't always think about because they're usually more focused on shooting from the inside of a vehicle to the outside.

Weapons pointed into the vehicle can be separately aimed with a smart turret or an internal weapons mount, and these are often bulky and hard to conceal. The cheaper option, which is also easier to conceal, is to hide grenades within the internal moulding within the vehicle. If the Coyote is also traveling in the passenger compartment, non-lethal grenades tend to be the weapon of choice.

Putting the grenade in the proper place requires an (Appropriate) Mechanic + Logic [Mental] (8, 30 minutes) Extended Test.

Detonating the grenade is a Simple Action, and takes effect as normal.

Runners and smugglers who lack the mechanical skills to build these in themselves can get a street mechanic to do so. The street price is 100 nuyen for a grenade that is to be triggered wirelessly, and 200 nuyen if the mechanic needs to run wires to the command node or any other specific point on the vehicle. Grenades concealed in this fashion gain an additional concealability modifier of –6, which applies to any sensors attempting to detect the weapon, or passengers trying to find where the grenade has been hidden.

runner, what protects you, the cargo, from a Coyote who thinks they can geek you, take your credsticks and goodies, and dump you in Puget Sound?

- THIS! This is what I'm talking about! Who would ride with any Coyote who has grenades wired inside the passenger compartment?
- Sticks

- When I see or work with someone I know, yeah, my gun's not pointed in their direction, because I trust them, but when I work with people I ain't seen before, I always keep a gun ready in case they want to scrag me. This is no different.
- Sledge

One of the best protections shadowrunners have from their Coyotes, if they're really worried about it, is that Coyotes don't want to get into a shootout with their cargo. For starters, we're not in the business of being gunslingers, so we don't want to throw down with people who can shoot a devil rat in the eye from two hundred meters. We want to be safe, so we may need to pack heat, but we know we're always better off when weapons stay holstered.

The second thing is, if our cargo dies, our rep takes a hit. The fixer who set up a ride that ends with dead clients isn't going to be calling on us again. The friends of the people who died will spread the word about how their friends went down, and if they get enough anger and liquor in them, they might take a shot at you themselves. In case this isn't already clear, none of this is good for business.

WHERE TO GO

Coyotes will operate almost anywhere there is a blocked path that someone wants travel. I specialize in getting in and out of Seattle, but I know a couple of guys in the CAS who get well paid to hop into and out of Aztlan. They are fantastic at what they do and have stayed alive at times when by all odds their bones should probably be bleaching in the sun. Remember the Renraku Arcology failure a couple of decades back? I was talking to a girl who was there—it took her about four days to work out a way to smuggle folks in and out after the shutters came down and the pyramid was cut off. She only ever used the route once to get some runners in. Probably a good move from what I heard afterwards.

Anywhere there is a border—and not just political or corporate borders, but any line that for some reason is difficult to cross—you will probably find a Coyote. If there is enough money to be had, you might even find more than one. Areas that have lots of borders tend to have lots of Coyotes. Heck, in Denver you could probably declare the job on your tax returns. The Allied German States have Coyotes in just about every bar, all of them waiting for your money to buy the next upgrade for their vehicle.

Just about any place that is hard to get into or out of will have Coyotes too, although there is a lot more risk getting into or out of Tír na nÓg, Chicago, or Asamando. Successful Coyotes in these areas charge a lot more, but it is a lot safer getting an old hand to get you in and out than it is trying to get yourself past a border patrol, especially on short notice.

Coyotes talk about being in the biz for the money, but plenty of them are also in it for the buzz. It's not everyone that can ride a microlight across the sea to Tír na nÓg from Wales; doing something that not many people can do is a thrill in itself. Of course you will normally find these thrill-seeker Coyotes in difficult, sometimes exotic places, if you are traveling from the Sioux sector in Denver to the UCAS sector, you may have someone more job-worthy. Incidentally the way to tell the difference is generally how distinctive the vehicle is. If you are riding in a bland, grey, nondescript van, you are more likely to be in the van of someone who is just earning some scratch. If you are in a flying vehicle with flames painted on the side while the "Ride of the Valkyries" blasts out the external speakers, you may well be in with a thrill seeker. Both kinds of Coyote will get you to the place that you want to go, but it's more exciting going with a thrill seeker. IMHO, of course.

CORPORATE COYOTES

Wherever you find money, you find a corporation chasing it. They need Coyote services just like anyone else, though for most Johnsons, the demand is sporadic, so they'll outsource it. Any corporation in a border town has a list of local Coyotes, both so they'll know who to call on when they need it, and so they'll know who might be smuggling people into and out of their territory. Doing jobs for a corp boss can be a lucrative gig; corps have plenty of cash, of course, and a lot of times their jobs involve business people instead of your more violent shadowrunner types, meaning there is less risk of being shot up. Corps have their ruthless side, of course, so you run the risk of working for a Johnson who decides he needs to eliminate any witnesses, but the more you work for the same guy, the better your relationship will be, so the risk of being offed for Mr. Johnson's convenience decreases.

If there is a corporate need to travel a particular route frequently, a corporation will often try to recruit a Coyote to a full-time staff position. This is the same trade-off shadowrunners face—you get more safety, better gear, a regular paycheck, and even health insurance, but you leave that certain something—independence, freedom, or what have you. I don't know if anyone really knows what they'll choose until they're offered the choice. I've seen people I thought would never soul out get swayed by the promise of a top-of-the-line Ares Roadmaster for their use on and off duty, and people I could have sworn were just dying for a little stability in their life turn down offer after offer and stay free until the end.

Me, I like being able to take off whenever I have to. I've been running into and out of Seattle for a decade, but if I wanted to, I could leave town at the drop of a hat, and that suits me just fine. I get kinda itchy when I get tied down, if you know what I mean.

But man, that new-model GMC Banshee is pretty wiz ...

- Never forget that a corporate Coyote's loyalty is to his corp, first and foremost. Don't put him in the place of having to choose between helping you and serving masters. You're not going to win that one too often.
- DangerSensei

FINDING A COYOTE

Getting in touch with a Coyote can be pretty hard if you don't know a fixer who has one on the books. Most successful Coyotes I know work through fixers and Johnsons, paying a middleman to screen out law enforcement or other possible trouble. Once you've been on the trail with a Coyote, most will pass along their commcode so you can get in touch with them next time. For us Coyotes it's a balancing act—advertise too much and the law will get on your case, advertise too little and that fancy van you've got sits idle in the garage.

So, let's say you're stuck somewhere, and you don't know a Coyote in that spot, and your fixers only know Coyotes in other cities. What do you do? Your best bet is to start hanging around bars and chatrooms that mechanics haunt. If you've found a place where someone knows which MCT engine part can be modified to fit into an Ares Roadmaster, you're probably in the right place. Once you're there, pay for a few drinks, sit for a while, and listen. Someone will be bound to start talking about fancy jobs they've done, and if you listen long enough, someone will talk about adding a quarter ton of StarSlab armor to a Ford Americar or some other mod that Joe Wageslave has no use for. Bingo. Buy a few more drinks and ask if the guy will introduce you to the owner of the pimped-out ride. But be smart. The mechanic isn't going to want to sell out their friend, so if you come off like a cop, you're not going to get anywhere. Do your best to make them want to make the introduction—hint at the benefits, most likely cash-related, that could result in the introduction, and make sure you don't come across as too desperate.

- I got pretty good at that conversation. You'd be surprised how often a decker needs a ride.
- Slamm-0!

- I would think you came into life with a good list of Coyote contacts. Isn't that a perk of having shadowrunner parents?
- 2XL

- Naw, hardly any of the old crew are still around. I just make friends with my winning personality.
- Slamm-0!

So there you go, the basics of being a Coyote. Don't think you're an expert now—until you know how to pull a t-bird out of a stall at 150 feet, or how to outrun a phalanx of drones closing on your six, there's more you could learn. But anyway, I hope that now y'all have a bit more understanding about the guy or gal behind the wheel. Like you, we're scrambling as best we can, trying to make a buck while not selling our souls. Remember that next time you think about killing the transport, and maybe we can come to some sort of arrangement where nobody has to die.

- Have people been getting more violent lately or something? If you know what you're doing, you avoid leaving a trail of bodies whenever you can. I don't see much of a point in shooting good help.
- Kay St. Irregular

- I blame action trids. Always showing people killing everyone that sees their face so they don't leave a trail. It's dumb, but kids these days don't know any better.
- Cayman

- Right. Blame the media. That always makes sense. Look, Movo just told us that Coyotes are in this for a buck like anyone else,

and the corps, including the law enforcement corps, know this. So in these extraction-happy times, they've focused on Coyotes as good sources of information about who's going where. They've been slinging the cash around, and more than an a few Coyotes have started singing, which yeah, is kind of a weird image. Point is, if there have been more problems between runners and Coyotes, it's because Coyotes have been selling us out more often.

- Marcos

- That's nonsense. Movo made it clear that Coyotes understand the importance of loyalty and good rep. I'm sure a few have turned, because there are a few pieces of crap in any group of people. If there are problems between Coyotes and runners, it's because we live in the world we live in, and every part of it has the potential to be a problem. Always has been, always will be.
- Bull

With the basics established, let's talk about the meat of the matter—the borders you need a Coyote to help you cross.

BORDERS

There are lots of borders for Coyotes to cross. Sometimes they are as obvious as the wall around Kowloon, while sometimes they're as subtle as entering a Wuxing corporate building. To help this discussion, I've graded the borders based on how hard they are to cross, though keep in mind that my grades, like any such system, are subjective. Ultimately how hard the border is to cross depends mostly on how much money people are willing to spend on keeping people out, or how much power or influence they'll bring to bear on that border.

When most people think of borders, they are really thinking of a border checkpoint, which is natural enough, since almost all normal border crossings go through a checkpoint. Coyotes, though, try to go around the checkpoints as much as they can to avoid paperwork, a Matrix trail, scanners, prying eyes, and any other complications that come with closely watched territory.

All border checkpoints have some general characteristics in common. Every checkpoint has some sort of electronic sensor to pick up items and things that shouldn't be passing by. I don't think I've seen any checkpoint without a camera, and most have microphones, cyberware scanners, millimeter-wave radar, radiation scanners and chem-sniffers. All of these sensors usually report back to a dedicated group of Matrix spiders who log and oversee the sensor operation. Some checkpoints also have the spiders feed suspicious sensor readings back to the personnel at the checkpoint; others have the information go past those folks before it goes to the spiders.

Matrix security varies, based on how sensitive the checkpoint is in the eyes of the administrating officials. On the Aztlan-CAS border, for example, Matrix security is top notch. Even the most minor checkpoint will be overseen by a government customs team, and this is reflected in the off-site backup that the checkpoints can call on. Systems on site are almost always slaved to a high-grade government or corporate server hosting a team of spiders. This doesn't mean they are impenetrable, though—we'll cover that in a bit.

Commlinks and decks, where legal, have to be broadcasting a legitimate SIN, as well as other form-filling bureaucracy like visas and customs information. Scanners at a checkpoint will be watching carefully for anything that's running silent, and if they catch a device that is that will be an immediate red flag. If you have a link or a deck that you don't want the powers that be to see, turning them off and hiding them in metal boxes is the safest way to get them across a border. Just remember to have a disposable link that's broadcasting whatever SIN you're using.

Magic security is normally taken very seriously as well, but given the size of the borders of a country, in most cases it is too big a job to set up a ward over the whole country. The checkpoints are usually warded, though, with a tunnel through the ward so that legitimate magical visitors are not unduly inconvenienced. As is the case with Matrix security, on most border checkpoints the magic support is remote, with mages in astral form ready to quickly respond along with spirit backup. The physical bodies of these mages are usually monitored in a hospital, so they can be expected to take a licking and keep on ticking. Usu-

ally these squads are loaded with foci and anchored spells as well. Oh, and the non-magic folk at the checkpoint are almost always trained to recognize when an astral form goes through them.

Physical security is also important. The layout of the border checkpoint will often involve concrete barriers, wire fences, explosives, and other methods of preventing someone unwanted from entering the country. This is where guarding a border is more serious than police work. If a criminal eludes Lone Star, the Star can track down and arrest the criminal; border guards, by contrast, may have to treat certain unwanted entrants into their country in a fair and diplomatic manner in order to avoid an international incident. Your border patrolman is therefore given wide discretion to prevent the visitor from stepping on domestic soil in the first place, which is why they will have sidearms and heavier handheld weaponry, along with grenades, rocket launchers, machine-gun emplacements, mines, and maybe even chemical weapons, depending on which international treaties are in force. Remember, running a border could technically be an act of war, and depending on the border the guards will take that personally.

Border guards tend not to be the light-hearted type, so restrain yourself from joking about bombs or forbidden goods when you talk to the guards. They have the discretion to kick you out if you're being an idiot, and they will do it if you tell them you have a bomb in your luggage. And they won't just kick you out—they'll first do a thorough, inside-and-outside search for any possible bombs, and when I say "inside and outside," I'm not talking about just your vehicle. Guards have significant power to inspect and examine visitors to their country, and they will use it if they feel the need to do so.

Another important note is that in most cases a border will consist of two checkpoints, one for the country that you are departing, and one for the country that you are entering. In most cases the checkpoint for the country that you are departing is a perfunctory check. It is important to be aware of, as if the two sides of the border are friendly, the staff and security of one border checkpoint can lend assistance to the other border checkpoint.

VERY EASY BORDERS

Some of the borders that are crossed are barely there. If you visit the Horizon head office in Los Angeles, you will notice a camera and maybe a magnetic anomaly detector, but there won't be anyone to check your visa or passport, even though you are technically entering a different country or corporate jurisdiction.

This is not to say that there isn't significant security in a given building, but the border checkpoint is just going to have a few cameras, and perhaps patrolling spirits and discreet drones. You will barely notice that this is a border, although you might notice building security for other reasons, and those security guards may claim they are border guards to give them an excuse to exceed their authority.

Examples: AAA Corporation public offices and buildings, novelty countries like Seeland.

TYPICAL VERY EASY BORDER GUARD (PROFESSIONAL RATING 2)

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS
4	4	3	3	4	3	4	5	6

Initiative: 7 + 1D6
Movement: 8/16/+2
Condition Monitor (P/S): 10/10
Limits: Physical 5, Mental 5, Social 7
Armor: 9
Skills (Dice Pools): Clubs 7, Dodge 4, Etiquette 6, First Aid 5, Intimidation 7, Perception 6, Pilot Ground Craft 5, Pistol 6, Running 6, Survival 6, Unarmed Combat 6
Gear: Armor vest, Erika Elite commlink (Device Rating 4), AR contacts (w/ flare compensation, image link)
Weapons:
Stun baton [Clubs, Acc 4, Reach 1, DV 9S(e), AP –5]
Defiance EX Shocker [Taser, Acc 4, DV 9S(e), AP –5, SS, RC —, 4(m)]
Colt America L36 [Light Pistol, Acc 7, DV 7P, AP -, SA, RC —, 11(c)]

TYPICAL VERY EASY BORDER HOST

Matrix security is easy to conceal, so even very easy borders tend to have excellent Matrix security. At a border, there is a host that performs the data collection.

Device Rating: 6
Default Attributes: Attack 6, Data Processing 9, Sleaze 7, Firewall 8
Running Programs: Rating 6 Agent (see below), 4 copies of Patrol IC

The agent is responsible for collecting the information of anyone who wishes to cross the border and forwarding that information to a processing center at head office. To aid this, the host offers a mark to any device that is not running silent. The agent approaches every avatar that enters the host, as well as every AR device that accesses the host, and asks each device for a SIN and a visa to pass by the checkpoint. It then collects the information and transmits it, encrypted, to the regional office, where the SIN and visa are checked. The results of the check are sent back to the agent, which then allows valid visitors to progress and orders the emplacements not to fire. Separate messages are also sent to any magical or physical security present.

Even very easy border hosts have IC to defend themselves, although typically the IC launched will be Trace and Blackout rather than something lethal.

TYPICAL VERY EASY MAGICAL PROTECTION

A very easy border will have patrolling spirits (Force 5) in the astral plane. They are instructed to report any active magic, but not to interfere without orders. Any booths

or protective structures will typically be warded (Force 2) with occasional astral mages (use Combat Mage, p. 116, *SR5*) on site once or twice per hour.

TYPICAL VERY EASY PHYSICAL PROTECTION

A very easy border may have been designed to allow backup to reach the scene quickly to sort out any embarrassing incidents before they become serious problems. The physical area will typically have armored glass (Armor 4) instead of normal glass, as well as solid cover (Armor 7) disguised as decorative planters, sculptures, or other furniture.

EASY BORDERS

One step up from a public office are the borders between close and friendly countries. The parties on both sides of the border secretly suspect the two entities will eventually merge, or at least that they have more in common with each other than they do with anyone else nearby.

Security is present at these checkpoints, and there is paperwork to be done, but it is pretty perfunctory. A wanderer would have to make an enemy of the guy in the booth to actually get searched or detained, and even if they are questioned, there is unlikely to be any serious delay to their journey, perhaps an hour or two of answering questions in a room. Security is present and the guards have tasers and stun batons on their hip, with sidearms available, usually in a lockbox. Matrix security is usually pretty good, since it will be overseen remotely, along with the sensor feeds. Discreet magical protection will exist as well; the booths are likely warded every few months, with mages and spirits on call.

Examples: The borders between countries in the Caribbean League, the Athabaskan Council—Algonkian-Manitou Council border, and the border between the German Federation and the United Netherlands, the internal borders in Denver (largely due to pragmatism rather than friendliness), the Australian-New Zealand border.

TYPICAL EASY BORDER GUARD

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	EDG	ESS
5	5	3	3	4	3	5	3	1	6

Initiative: 8 + 1D6
Movement: 10/20/+2
Condition Monitor (P/S): 11/10
Limits: Physical 5, Mental 5, Social 6
Armor: 9
Skills (Dice Pools): Clubs 7, Dodge 6, Etiquette 5, First Aid 4, Intimidation 5, Leadership 4, Perception 10, Pilot Ground Craft 5, Pistols 8, Running 7, Survival 6, Unarmed Combat 9, Language (Relevant to Cross-Border Nation) 5
Gear: Armor vest, Erika Elite commlink (Device Rating 4), AR contacts (w/ flare compensation, image link)
Weapons:
Stun Baton [Clubs, Acc 4, Reach 1, DV 9S(e), AP –5]
Defiance EX Shocker [Taser, Acc 4, DV 9S(e), AP –5, SS, RC —, 4(m)]
Colt America L36 [Light Pistol, Acc 7, DV 7P, AP —, SA, RC —, 11(c)]

TYPICAL EASY BORDER HOST

Easy borders have adequate security. They do not worry as much as very easy borders about having the security blend into the background, but they don't have the sheer intimidating bulwark of forces that hostile borders can erect.

Host Rating: 7
Default Ratings: Attack 7, Data Processing 10, Sleaze 8, Firewall 9
Running Programs: Rating 6 Agent (see below), 3 copies of Patrol IC, 1 copy of Track IC

The agent is responsible for collecting the information of anyone who wishes to pass across the border, and forwarding that information to a processing center at head office. As with very easy borders, the host offers a mark to any device that is not running silent. The agent approaches every avatar that enters the host, along with every AR device that accesses the host, and asks each device for a SIN and a visa. It collects the information and then encrypts and transmits it to the head office, where all documents are checked against existing databases. The results of the check are sent back to the agent, who then allows valid visitors to progress by opening gates, and orders the emplacements not to fire. Separate messages are also sent to any magical or physical security present.

Note that it is possible to spoof the agent to open the gates, however this will be almost immediately noticed by the head office, and appropriate steps taken. Not to mention the physical and magical security will not have received the "all clear" signal.

Even easy borders are ready to defend themselves. On the Matrix level, typically the IC launched will be Track, but some checkpoints have Scramble IC waiting in reserve if they want to force people out of the system.

TYPICAL EASY MAGICAL PROTECTION

An easy border will have patrolling spirits in Astral (Force 5) instructed to report any active magic and detain any astral forms that have active foci or active magical auras until they have been cleared by a patrolling mage. Any booths or protective structures will typically be warded (Force 4) with occasional astral mages (use Combat Mage, p. 116, *SR5*) on site every ten minutes or so.

TYPICAL EASY PHYSICAL PROTECTION

An easy border is expected to be able to resist a somewhat determined illegal alien. Typically concrete barriers prevent easy access outside of accepted lanes, and the

guard booths have armored glass on top of concrete. Explosives and mines are not typically deployed at this type of border, but net traps and road spikes are ready to be cast over pedestrians and vehicles.

NORMAL BORDERS

A normal border is a border between two nominally friendly countries that are not at war.

Security is significant at a normal border, and every person or vehicle is carefully searched. It is possible to be turned away from the border if paperwork is not up to date, or a guard is offended or having a bad day. Security personnel typically has a taser on one hip and some sort of pistol on the other. The CAS border guards famously have Desert Eagles, but most border guards have standard heavy pistols. Matrix security is serious at these spots, and hosts on the border often have damaging IC active and patrolling in order to quickly react to threats. Magical protection is not discreet, with wards and anchored spells plain to see. Spirits and mages are usually patrolling, and there will often be a mage physically present.

Examples: The Seattle-Salish-Shidhe border, the Caribbean League-CAS border, the English-Euro border, the Russia-China Border, and most arcologies, including the ACHE in Seattle.

TYPICAL NORMAL BORDER GUARD

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	EDG	ESS
5	6	5	5	4	3	4	3	1	6

Initiative: 9 + 1D6
Movement: 12/24/+2
Condition Monitor (P/S): 11/11
Limits: Physical 7, Mental 5, Social 6
Armor: 12
Skills (Dice Pools): Automatics 10, Clubs 11, Dodge 10, First Aid 6, Heavy Weapons 8, Etiquette 5, Intimidation 5, Leadership 4, Perception 10, Pilot Ground Craft 9, Pistols 11, Running 7, Survival 6, Unarmed Combat 10, Language (Cross Border) 6
Gear: Armor jacket, Erika Elite commlink (Device Rating 4), AR goggles (w/ flare compensation, low-light vision, smartlink)

Weapons:

Defiance EX Shocker [Taser, Acc 4(6), DV 9S(e), AP –5, SS, RC —, 4(m), w/ smartlink]
Colt Government 2066 [Heavy Pistol, Acc 6(8), DV 7P, AP –1, SA, RC —, 14(c), w/ smartlink]

Note that each site typically also has a senior border guard with the same statistics as the other guards, except their Willpower is raised to 6 and they have Leadership Skill 4. other than a Leadership Skill of 4 and Willpower Attribute of 6

The equipment listed above is the equipment typically on each guard's person. If the guards have time to get to one of their lockboxes in the case of an attack or an attempted breakthrough, they will have access to additional equipment such as machine guns and grenade launchers.

Standard border posts also have the authority to call in air support, although this will typically take ten to thirty minutes to arrive.

TYPICAL NORMAL BORDER HOST

Normal borders have good security, and they are perfectly content for it to be visible. They are expected to deal with non-hostile personnel and refrain from hitting the commlinks of valid tourists.

Device Rating: 8
Default Ratings: Attack 10, Data Processing 9, Sleaze 8, Firewall 11
Running Programs: Rating 6 Agent (see below), 3 copies of Patrol IC, 1 copy of Track IC, 1 copy of Killer IC

The agent is responsible for collecting the information of anyone who wishes to pass by the border and forwarding that information to a processing center at head office. As with other borders, the host offers a mark to any device that is not running silent. The agent approaches every avatar that enters the host, as well as every AR device that accesses the host, and asks each device for a SIN and a visa. It then collects the information and transmits it in encrypted format to the head office, where the SIN and visa are checked. The results of the check are sent back to the agent, which then allows valid visitors to progress by opening gates and ordering the emplacements not to fire. Separate messages are also sent to any magical or physical security present.

Note that it is possible to spoof the agent to open the gates, though this will be almost immediately noticed by the head office, and appropriate steps taken. Not to mention the physical and magical security will not have received the "all clear" signal.

Normal border hosts are more aggressive than easy and very easy borders, with Killer IC loaded and running at all times. Track IC is usually used in tandem with Killer IC, so that security can attempt to find the physical location of any hackers and bring them into custody—or at least ensure they are not on their side of the border. When security notices any evidence of hacking, that evidence will be sent back to the head office for analysis. This analysis can give GOD and any Matrix detectives a bonus to track or recognize any hackers who have been involved in the hack. To determine if the security forces learn anything, make a Logic (7) + Software (9) (Data Processing) Test opposed individually by the Intuition + Hacking (Sleaze) of any hackers involved in the breach. Net successes for security on this test subtract from the Sleaze attribute of hackers for any tests on the host. As with any information, this evidence degrades over time, at a rate of one net success per 24 hours until the signature is obsolete. Alternately, hackers can get rid of the penalty by logging out of the host and staying out for three hours.

TYPICAL NORMAL MAGICAL PROTECTION

A normal border will have at least half a dozen patrolling spirits in astral space (Force 7) instructed to report any active magic and detain any astral forms that have active foci or active magical auras until they have been cleared by a patrolling mage. Any booths or protective structures will typically be warded (Force 7), with at least one astral mage and one mage (use Combat Mage, p. 116, *SR5*, but add a Force 2 power focus to each) physically present on site at all times. In addition, there is often an adept (use the Gunslinger Adept, p. 123, *SR5*) with a Force 1 weapon focus.

TYPICAL NORMAL PHYSICAL PROTECTION

In addition to the armored booths of previous border grades, the layout of the border checkpoint has been carefully sculpted to prevent vehicles from being able to ram a booth or any of the gates. Narcojet mines, electrified wires, and patrolling drones keep the surrounding area clear of intruders while the whole checkpoint can go into lockdown that drops steel shutters over any glass, even the armored glass, as well as opening pits in the road to prevent any wheeled or tracked vehicle from progressing through the checkpoint.

HARD BORDERS

A hard border exists where two countries have reason to be suspicious of each other, are competitors, have a historic rivalry, or where the border crossing is near a particularly sensitive government project. Generally, traffic through the border is less than at more relaxed borders.

Security verges on the ridiculous. Even if all paperwork is up to date, there is a chance that the guards will find or invent some reason to turn otherwise legitimate visitors away. The guards may be openly prejudiced against the residents in the other country. Guards patrol with their fingers on the triggers of their weapons and are more than happy to fall back on anti-vehicle weaponry or even chemical attacks. Matrix security isn't significantly stronger than at normal checkpoints, but it is focused more on offensive actions than defensive. On top of that, there is a spider assigned to the border at all times. There will usually be one or more technomancers on call as well. Mages and magical beasts are on patrol, both astrally and physically, usually laden with foci and triggered spells. Wards are common and strong.

Examples: Customs for flights between China and Japan, the Aztlan-CAS border, any Corporate head office that does not share its premises with the public-facing side of the business, and most large corporate R&D divisions.

TYPICAL HARD BORDER GUARD

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	EDG	ESS
6	6	5 (7)	4	4	3	4	2	1	2.7

Initiative: 11 + 3D6
Movement: 12/24/+2
Condition Monitor (P/S): 11/10
Limits: Physical 7, Mental 5, Social 4
Armor: 15
Skills (Dice Pools): Automatics 13, Clubs 11, Dodge 12, Etiquette 4, Heavy Weapons 11, Intimidation 8, Leadership 6, Perception 10, Pilot Ground Craft 10, Pistol 12, Running 6, Survival 6, Unarmed Combat 11, Language (Cross Border) 8
Augmentations: Cybereyes 2 (low-light vision, smartlink), wired reflexes 2
Gear: Armor jacket, Helmet, Erika Elite commlink (Device Rating 4)
Weapons:
Defiance EX Shocker [Taser, Acc 4(6), DV 9S(e), AP –5, SS, RC —, 4(m), w/ smartlink]
Colt Government 2066 [Heavy Pistol, Acc 6(8), DV 7P, AP –1, SA, RC —, 14(c), w/ smartlink]
HK-227 [Submachine Gun, Acc 5(7), DV 7P, AP —, SA/BF/FA, RC (1), 28 (c)]

Note that each site will typically also have a senior border guard with identical statistics, with Willpower raised to 5 and a Leadership Skill of 6. Also, there are a higher proportion of trolls and elves in the border patrol forces, and their attributes should be adjusted accordingly.

The equipment listed above is the equipment typically on the person of each guard. If the guards have time to get to one of their lockboxes in the case of an attack or an attempted breakthrough, they will have access to equipment such as heavy machine guns and grenade launchers. Machine guns will typically have explosive or tracer ammunition.

Hard border posts also have the authority to call in air support. There are typically two or three helicopter gunships sited no more than a minute's flight away, although pilots are not always sitting in the cockpit waiting for the call.

TYPICAL HARD BORDER HOST

Device Rating: 9
Default Ratings: Attack 11, Data Processing 10, Sleaze 9, Firewall 12
Running Programs: Rating 6 Agent (see below), 5 copies of Patrol IC, 2 copy of Track IC, 1 copy of Black IC

As with the other border nodes, the agent is responsible for collecting the information of anyone who wishes to cross the border and forwarding that information to a processing center at head office, via the methods mentioned above. At hard border hosts, every request is manually examined by a spider at headquarters. In addition, there is at least one spider logged into the host, although the spider may not be physically present.

It is still possible to spoof the agent to open the gates; however, this will be almost immediately noticed by head office, and the physical and magical security will not have received the "all clear" signal.

Hard border nodes want intruders to be nervous about hacking in, which is why the Black IC is always running. The host will pull back some copies of Patrol IC and replace it with Black IC if it's nearing its program limit. When security notices any evidence of hacking, that evidence will be sent back to the head office for analysis. This analysis can give GOD and any Matrix detectives a bonus to track or recognize any hackers who have been involved in the hack. To determine if the security forces learn anything, make a Logic (7) + Software (9) (Data Processing) Test opposed individually by the Intuition + Hacking (Sleaze) of any hackers involved in the breach. Net successes for security on this test subtract from the Sleaze attribute of hackers for any tests on the host. As with any information, this evidence degrades over time, at a rate of one net success per 24 hours until the signature is obsolete. Alternately, hackers can get rid of the penalty by logging out of the host and staying out for three hours.

TYPICAL HARD MAGICAL PROTECTION

A hard border will have at least a dozen patrolling Force 9 spirits in astral space instructed to report any active magic and detain with force any astral forms that have active foci or active magical auras until they have been cleared by a patrolling mage. Any booths or protective structures will typically be warded with at least two astral mages and one mage physically present (use Combat Mage, p. 116, *SR5*, but add a force 3 power focus to each).

In addition, there is usually an adept (use the Gunslinger Adept, p. 123, *SR5*) leading the mundane guards.

In addition, the mana sphere in the area will have been carefully cultivated to give a background count aspected toward the resident mages. The aspect varies depending on the preferred magical style of the country, and some characters might find that they match the aspect (background counts will be more detailed in the forthcoming book *Street Grimoire*).

TYPICAL HARD PHYSICAL PROTECTION

In addition to the armored booths of previous border grades, the layout of the border checkpoint has been carefully sculpted to prevent vehicles from being able to ram a booth or any of the gates. Convenience has been

sacrificed for security. It would take a tank to be able to move through the checkpoint without falling into a pit or running into a thick concrete wall. Mines release narcojet or hallucinogenic gas, while electrified wires and patrolling drones keep the surrounding area clear of intruders. On top of that, the whole checkpoint can go into a lockdown which drops steel shutters over any glass, even the armored glass.

VERY HARD BORDERS

Very hard borders exist where the two parties are currently involved in a conflict, or where tensions are high, but the borders are technically open for some reason. People successfully passing the border per day can usually be counted on one hand. People being killed while attempting to enter the country illegally is a frequent occurrence, and guards are usually commended for taking such action against possible intruders.

Security is extreme and typically is enforced by the armed forces of a country, or the elite security troops of a corporation (such as Renraku's Red Samurai). The border guards are in teams of at least five, and they include at least two heavy weapons specialists with their weapons locked and loaded. The checkpoint is usually strong enough to serve as a makeshift fortress, and it would be able to slow down an assault by military hardware. Matrix security tends to have a "one strike" attitude, with at least one physically present technomancer, several spiders and riggers, and multiple lethal patrolling IC. Paractritters such as wyverns and hellhounds continually patrol alongside small teams of magically active guards, including adepts and mages. Many rituals will have been enacted over the area.

Examples: The Aztlan–Amazonia border, the Israel–Palestine Border,

TYPICAL VERY HARD BORDER GUARD

At this point there is no 'typical' border guard; generally the borders will be staffed with elite soldiers such as the Renraku Red Samurai or the Aztlan Leopard Guards. In case runners are trying to bypass one of these points, and there are some guards who haven't been fully defined, this template can serve as a starting point.

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	EDG	ESS
6	6	5 (8)	4	4	3	4	3	1	0.7

Initiative: 12 + 4D6
Movement: 12/24/+2
Condition Monitor (P/S): 11/10
Limits: Physical 7 (8), Mental 5, Social 4
Armor: 18
Skills (Dice Pools): Automatics 16, Clubs 11, Dodge 16, Etiquette 5, Heavy Weapons 15, Intimidation 7, Leadership 5, Perception 10, Pilot Ground Craft 12, Pistol 12, Running 6, Survival 6, Unarmed Combat 7, Language (Cross Border) 8
Augmentations: Cybereyes 2 (low-light vision, smartlink), wired reflexes 3
Gear: Full body armor, helmet, Erika Elite commlink (Device Rating 4)
Weapons:

- Defiance EX Shocker [Taser, Acc 4(6), DV 9S(e), AP –5, SS, RC —, 4(m), w/ smartlink]
- Colt Government 2066 [Heavy Pistol, Acc 6(8), DV 7P, AP –1, SA, RC —, 14(c), w/ smartlink]
- Ares Alpha [Assault Rifle, Acc 5(7), DV 1P, AP –2, SA/BF/FA, RC 2, 42 (c), Grenade Launcher, Acc: 4(6), DV Grenade, AP Grenade, SS, RC —, 6 (c)]
- HE Grenade [DV 16P, AP –2, Blast –2/m]

The equipment available to these guards is generally expensive and high quality. The items above are really just a starting point. One way to help flesh out these guards is to pick different weapons with an availability of 12+, and then give the guard the appropriate skill to use that weapon at Rating 4 or greater.

Very hard border checkpoints also have air support in the form of GMC Thunderbirds less than a minute away. Help is mere moments away, and that help is armed with heat-seeking missiles and vehicle-mounted lasers.

TYPICAL VERY HARD BORDER HOST

Very hard borders have excellent security. They are not at all focused on being discreet; quite the opposite, in fact. Very hard borders want to look intimidating; they want would-be intruders to take one look at the host and think "Nah, maybe not." Generally the hardware is the same as for hard borders, but there are no agents. All the digital work is manually handled by an on-site spider.

Device Rating: 10
Default Ratings: Attack 12, Data Processing 11, Sleaze 10, Firewall 13
Running Programs: 5 copies of Patrol IC, 2 copies of Track IC, 2 copies of Black IC

As with the agents at other border hosts, the spider is responsible for collecting the information of anyone who wishes to pass by the border and forwarding that information to a processing center at the head office. As with other borders, the host offers a mark to any device that is not running silent. The spider approaches every avatar that enters the host, and every AR device that accesses the host and asks each device for a SIN, and a visa to pass by the checkpoint. The spider then collects the information and transmits it to the head office, where the SIN and visa are checked. The results of the check are sent back to the spider, which then allows valid visitors to progress by opening the gates and ordering the emplacements not to fire. Separate messages are also sent to any magical or physical security present. At very hard hosts, every request is manually examined by a spider at headquarters.

There is always a spider physically present at the checkpoint, and at least one remotely accessing the host from the head office. One or more of the spiders will be a technomancer who has compiled several Rating 6 sprites.

It still possible to spoof orders from the spider to open the gates, though this will be almost immediately noticed by head office. Appropriate steps will be taken, and the spider will be alerted. Not to mention the fact that the physical and magical security will not have received the "all clear" signal.

Very hard border hosts are unforgiving with their Black IC. They have Track IC, but to them, finding any potential invaders is secondary to hurting them and forcing them to withdraw as quickly as possible. They want an attempted hack to be so painful that the hackers will never attempt it again—if they survive. When security notices any evidence of hacking, that evidence will be sent back to the head office for analysis. This analysis can give GOD and any Matrix detectives a bonus to track or recognize any hackers who have been involved in the hack. To determine if the security forces learn anything, make a Logic (7) + Software (9) (Data Processing) Test opposed individually by the Intuition + Hacking (Sleaze) of any hackers involved in the breach. Net successes for security on this test subtract from the Sleaze attribute of hackers for any tests on the host. As with any information, this evidence degrades over time, at a rate of one net success per 24 hours until the signature is obsolete. Alternately, hackers can get rid of the penalty by logging out of the host and staying out for three hours.

TYPICAL VERY HARD MAGICAL PROTECTION

A very hard border will have at least a dozen Force 8 spirits patrolling in astral space instructed to report any active magic and detain with force any astral forms that have active foci or active magical auras until they have been cleared by a patrolling mage. Any booths or protective structures will typically be warded with at least two astral mages and one physical mage (use Combat Mage, p. 116 *SR5*, but add a Force 3 power focus to each) on site.

In addition, there is usually a team of adepts (use the Gunslinger Adept, p. 123, *SR5*) leading the mundane guards, one of whom will have a power focus, the additional power points of which will provide the power of astral perception.

Magical critters such as hellhounds and trained devil-rats are on patrol, often supported by beast spirits.

The mana sphere in the area will have been carefully cultivated to give a background count 4, aspected towards the resident mages. The aspect varies depending on the preferred magical style of the country, and some characters might find that they match the aspect (background counts will be discussed in more detail in the upcoming *Street Grimoire* sourcebook).

TYPICAL VERY HARD PHYSICAL PROTECTION

In addition to armored booths, the layout of the border checkpoint has been carefully sculpted to prevent vehicles from being able to ram a booth or any of the gates. Convenience has been sacrificed for security, and it would take a tank to be able to move through the checkpoint without falling in a pit or being stopped by a thick concrete wall. Land mines, electrified wires, and patrolling drones keep the surrounding area clear of intruders, and the checkpoint can go into a lockdown, dropping steel shutters over all of the glass.

At this level, it is hard to physically move through the checkpoint due to the overwrought security, even if a runner is a legitimate visitor and all their paperwork checks out. Just navigating the reinforced concrete maze will take several minutes of slow driving in a vehicle.

BOOKKEEPING

Remember when passing borders, you will be moving to a different government area, even if that area is corporate; there are different laws, different cultures, and varying rules about what is and is not allowed through. Everyone who passes a border needs to make sure they are allowed to do so—in other words their SIN must contain a passport, they need a visa for those countries that require one, and they need a background that doesn't forbid entry. For example, most major countries forbid entry to anyone who has a conviction for a violent crime. It is possible to get around these, normally by asking for an exemption, but it requires time and planning. I imagine some runners who would normally be allowed in a country get a Coyote to transport them just to avoid the paperwork.

In any case, even with instantaneous international communications, getting all the required approvals will usually be a couple of hours of form filling spread over three to five days depending on the efficiency of the host country. This is why a few countries negotiate visa waiver programs, since these cut out about half the paperwork.

GETTING PAST BORDERS

How do Coyotes do it? How do they get you past all that security and surveillance? Why should runners give them some of their hard-earned nuyen?

Those Coyotes who hop borders have several tactics.

- **Barefacing It Out:** A Coyote might roll up to a border and rely on the fact that their vehicle doesn't look suspicious to get them through. It's wise to have a backup to this plan in case no one is fooled.
- **Targeting the Meat:** If a Coyote knows a border guard security spider who owes him a few favors, or who is on the take, that can be incredibly effective. This sort of arrangement doesn't usually last for very long, but

it can be profitable while it does. Just hope that the cargo doesn't screw it up by acting like idiots.

- **Go Around:** Border checkpoints are hard work. If Coyotes know about some nearby tunnels, or can go across an unguarded part of the border, they can avoid the hassle.
- **Punch It!:** Not really a tactic, but a prepared Coyote can shoot their way past an unprepared border. It's more of a one-time thing, as the border will be on the lookout for that Coyote from that point on.
- **Hack:** A really good hacker can bypass some of the security so a van full of runners could slip by.
- **Forgery:** Some agencies and parts of corporations can get waved through select borders, so forging the proper credentials can help. If a Coyote can get credentials for Zurich Orbital Financial Auditors, for example, there are few places on Earth that will stop them.

A Coyote might use any one of these tactics, or mix and match, or use part of one to get halfway through and then improvise the rest. Their ability to know which tactics to choose and to invent tactics on the fly is why people pay them the big bucks.

SIX SAMPLE COYOTES

Here are six Coyotes that any gamemaster can slide into a mission to help players get from one place to another without dying or destroying their cargo. The Coyotes have a variety of skills and experience levels to be useful from moving around gang territory to sneaking into and out of Chicago or other dangerous sprawls.

JOCK BEAN, GUIDE

STREET-LEVEL, GETTING AROUND A CITY (ORK UNDERGROUND)

Jock is a ganger whose thirst for money led him out of his gang when he realized that he would never make any money or influence within the gang. So now he uses his detailed knowledge of the Ork Underground to guide strangers in and out of Seattle's newest suburb. Jock is unusual in that he doesn't usually use a vehicle, and he normally guides visitors into and out of the area on foot.

Over the past two years Jock has become very well versed in how the Underground works and has guided many corporate kids down to get the thrill of the rough life. His skill and discretion have earned him enough to gain some light augmentations for his own protection.

He is easy to find as he always drinks at the Cavern, a dive on the outskirts of Redmond, where the barman acts as his fixer for a share of the profits. This side business may be the only thing keeping the Cavern in business, that and the fact that Jock spends a good portion of his share drinking.

MALE TROLL

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	EDG	ESS
7 (9)	5	3 (4)	7	4	3	4	3	5	4.5

Initiative: 8 + 1D6
Movement: 10/20/+2
Condition Monitor (P/S): 11/10
Limits: Physical 9, Mental 5, Social 5
Armor: 15
Skills (Dice Pools): Athletics skill group 9, Blades 8, Disguise 5, Etiquette 5, Intimidation 7, Leadership 4, Navigation 7, Negotiation 7, Pistols 8, Sneaking 9, Unarmed Combat 8, Ork Underground Tunnels 6, Seattle Street Gangs 6, Sprawl Life 8
Augmentations: Aluminum bone lacing, reaction enhancers 1
Qualities: Addiction (Moderate, alcohol), Blandness, Homeground (Ork Underground)
Gear: Armor jacket (w/ Insulation 3), Renraku Sensei commlink (Device Rating 3), Yamaha Growler, 3 doses of jazz, 2 doses of kamikaze, trodes, trauma patch, crowbar
Weapons:
Ares Predator V [Heavy Pistol, Acc 5(6), DV 9P, AP –2, SA, RC —, 15(c), 1 extra clip, laser sight]
Sword [Blades, Acc 4, Reach 1, DV 10P, AP –2]
Contacts: Bartender (5/2), Fixer (3/3)
Nuyen: 385

TIMOTHY MOVO, RIGGER

GETTING INTO/OUT OF CITIES (SEATTLE)

Timothy, like many successful Coyotes, has a mysterious past. No one seems to have worked with him more than ten years ago, but those longer-term customers say that he was pretty skilled even when he first arrived on the scene. He drives a GMC Bulldog that has seen decades of service. Although he affects a southern accent and a very Republic of Texas-inspired ten-gallon hat, anyone who rides with him will notice that he loses his drawl when there are tense moments or when he gets caught up in the action. Timothy tends to hang out on the Salish-Shidhe side of the UCAS-Salish Shidhe border, but when he is in Seattle he has a couple of suburban bars where he tends to unwind.

Friendly, but professional, Timothy has little patience for anyone who tries to take advantage of him, and has prepared his ride with various defensive measures to make sure he won't get taken by surprise by his often touchy and paranoid cargo. His fake identity is that of a dangerous goods courier, giving him plenty of excuses for frequent travel, as well as a plausible excuse for lead boxes.

MALE HUMAN

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	EDG	ESS
2	2	5 (6)	2	2	3	4	4	4	1.05

Initiative: 10 + 2D6
Movement: 4/8/+2
Condition Monitor (P/S): 9/9
Limits: Physical 4, Mental 4, Social 4
Armor: 9
Skills (Dice Pools): Acting skill group 9, Automatics 5, Automotive Mechanic 7, Disguise 7, Gunnery 7, Influence skill group 9, Longarms 4, Perception 9, Pilot ground craft (Wheeled) 12(14), Pistol 6, Unarmed Combat 6, Area Knowledge (Seattle roads) 7, Seattle Fixers 6, Interest (National politics) 4, Profession (Border security) 8, Profession (UCAS military) 6, Wenatchee 5
Qualities: Guts
Augmentations: Adrenal pump 1, control rig 2, tracheal filter 2, wired reflexes 1
Gear: Armor vest, Automotive Shop, aviator glasses (image link, flare compensation, vision enhancement 3), containment manacles (2), plastic restraints (10), ear buds (w/ audio enhancement 1, spatial recognizer), fake SIN (Rating 4,) fake licenses (all Rating 4; control rig, wired reflexes, Browning Ultra-Power), Transys Avalon (Device Rating 6), satellite uplink, Basic Doc Wagon contract, mapsoft
Vehicle: GMC Bulldog w/ rigger adaptation (Sensor 6); installed grenade dispenser (thermal smoke, Neurostun X),
Weapons:
Browning Ultra-Power [Heavy Pistol, Acc 5(6), DV 8P, AP –1, SA, RC —, 10(c), 3 extra clips]
Contacts: Mechanic (3/2), Border Guard Spider (3/2), Fixer (3/3), Hacker (3/4), UCS Army Lieutenant (2/2)
Nuyen: 1,180¥

MENDLE THE MAGNIFICENT, FLAMBOYANT ADEPT

GETTING INTO AND OUT OF COUNTRIES (TÍR TAIRNGIRE)

Not all Coyotes use cyberware to give them an edge. Mendle is an adept who uses his magic abilities to talk himself out of trouble. He hangs out at the best nightclubs in Seattle and has made enough money to be a baron in a feudal country. He specializes in getting into and out of Tír Tairngire, and does so at reasonably affordable rates. Most Coyotes have secret routes into and out of where they need to be, but it's rumored that Mendle mostly relies on the fact that he has seduced one of the Princes of the Tír. It seems unlikely—if you were making time with a Tír Prince, you could probably do a lot better for yourself than being a border runner. But then again, maybe he does it because the lifestyle suits him. He always leaves late at night, after he has spent some time at Dante's Inferno or Club Penumbra. His rate goes through the roof if you ask him to go during the day, and he won't consider runs between 6 a.m. and 11 a.m. No one has worked out his exact route, since he jams GPS in his vehicle and there are no windows visible from the passenger area, but he doesn't take much longer than a legal journey does, so

it must be fairly direct. Attractive passengers, male and female, gain a lot of attention from him while he negotiates the terms of the job, but once the passengers have loaded up he is completely professional until drop off.

MALE HUMAN

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	EDG	ESS	M
4	5	6 (9)	3	2	2	5	5	2	6	6

Initiative: 14 + 4D6
Movement: 10/20/+2
Condition Monitor: 10/9
Limits: Physical 6(7), Mental 4, Social 6
Armor: 8
Skills: Acting skill group 3, Etiquette 3, Gunnery 4, Negotiation 4, Perception 5, Pilot Ground Craft (Wheeled) 6(8), Pistols 4, Sneaking 2, Unarmed Combat 4, Area Knowledge (Roads near Seattle) 4, Border Security Procedures 4, Tir Courtly Rules 4,
Adept Powers: Combat Sense 1, Danger Sense 3, Improved Ability (Pilot Ground Craft) 2, Improved Reflexes 3, Improved Senses (Direction Sense)
Gear: Auctioneer Business Clothing, glasses (w/ flare compensation, image link), Fake SIN (Rtg. 4), Fake License (Remington Roomsweeper), Transys Avalon w/satellite uplink (Device Rating 6), mapsoft, Doc Wagon contract (Basic)
Vehicle: Hyundai Hsin-Hyung (Sensor 6)
Weapons:
Remington Roomsweeper [Heavy Pistol, Acc 4, DV 7P, AP -1, SA, 8(m)]
Contacts: Tir Tairngire Minor Noble (3/4), Tir Tairngire Noble's Daughter (6/1), Border Guard (3/2), Fixer (3/2)

OORZAK, POLITICAL RIGGER

WATER-BASED COVERT TRAVEL (EUROPORT)

Moving around major ports, Oorzak always has a cause. She's got a boat and is more than happy to move anyone around the Europort. Rumor has it she is an ex-shadowrunner who turned to smuggling people around a fractured country when she made too many enemies within Russia, although no shadowrunner with a similar description has ever had that name. Now she spreads her own personal brand of anarchism to her passengers. Her cargo generally puts up with being a captive audience due to Oorzak's reputation for quiet pickup and delivery, and most of her business is from repeat customers. All this means that she must be doing something right. Oorzak has been caught a few times, but each time she has been released with a warning and a hefty fine due to a lack of hard evidence (and possible pull by her political connections), which suits her just fine.

FEMALE ELF

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	EDG	ESS
4	7 (9)	4	3	3	2	3	5	1	5.4

Initiative: 7 + 1D6
Movement: 14/28/+2
Condition Monitor (P/S): 10/10
Limits: Physical 5, Mental 4, Social 7
Armor: 12
Skills (Dice Pools): Automatics 14, Clubs 12, Diving 7, Electronic Warfare 7, Escape Artist 12, Intimidation 8, Leadership 9, Navigation (Europort Region) 7(9), Pilot Ground Craft 8, Pilot Watercraft (Surface Vessels) 9(11), Pistols 11, Sneaking 11, Swimming 7, Unarmed Combat 12
Augmentations: Mnemonic enhancer 2, muscle toner 2
Gear: Armor jacket, Erika Elite commlink (Device Rating 4), Middle Lifestyle (1 month)
Vehicle: Yongkang Gala Trinity (Sensor 6)
Contacts: Europort Fixer (3/4), Europort Coast Guardsman (2/2), Mr. Johnson [SK] (2/2)
Nuyen: 500¥

RHINEGOLD, STOIC CYBER-RIGGER

MOVING AROUND FRACTURED CITIES (DENVER)

Sometimes a guy sees a movie and decides that will be his way of life. I don't know what Rhinegold's original name was, but when *Die Nagelring* became a big hit a decade ago he didn't look back. He is mighty distinctive—with his chainmail and 'zweihander' sword, he looks like a real Teutonic knight, assuming there were ever any dwarf knights. That's from a distance—up close it's easy to see his cyberhand and the datajack that he uses to control his station wagon and collection of drones. He's been known to bargain down to lower prices if you buy into the "Beer and Glory" persona he tries to project, but even if you don't, he is an excellent Coyote that will get anyone from one part of Denver to another without much hassle or the inconvenience of obtaining a sector pass. He is particularly good at keeping secrets, claiming that he

never remembers the business that folks are going about or where he drops anyone off. He is happy to take any job, but it seems like the Japanacorps don't like his eccentric image, so he largely caters to corporations based in North America, like Ares, Horizon, and Aztechnology.

MALE DWARF

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	EDG	ESS
6	4	5	4	6	2	5	3	1	3.55

Initiative: 10 + 1D6
Movement: 8/16/+1
Condition Monitor (P/S): 11/11
Limits: Physical 7, Mental 5, Social 6
Armor: 12
Skills (Dice Pools): Electronic Warfare 6, Etiquette 6, Hacking skill group 4, Navigation 6, Negotiation 7, Pilot Ground Craft (Wheeled) 11(13), Pistols 6, Running 6, Unarmed Combat 7, Area Knowledge (Denver sewers) 4, Area Knowledge (Denver) 5, Border Security Procedures 4
Augmentations: Control rig 2, cyberhand (light cyberpistol), simrig
Qualities: High Pain Tolerance 2, Social Stress, Toughness
Gear: Armor jacket, Erika Elite commlink (Device Rating 4), fake SIN 4, Maersk Spider, Middle Lifestyle (Dwarf, 1 month), Keg of beer, Platinum Doc Wagon contract
Weapons:
Ares Predator V [Heavy Pistol, Acc 5(7), DV 9P, AP –2, SA, RC —, 15(c)]
Sword [Blades, Acc 6, Reach 1, DV 7P, AP –2]
High Explosive Grenades [DV 16P, AP –2, –2/m, 5 grenades]
Vehicles: Ford Americar (Sensor 6), Steel Lynx w/ Ingram Valiant, 3 Sikorsky-Bell Microskimmers,
Contacts: Mr. Johnson [Ares] (2/2), Mr. Johnson [Aztechnology] (2/2), Mr. Johnson [Horizon] (2/2), Fixer (3/2)
Nuyen: 855¥

GLORIA "CONTRAIL" BLITZER, TECHNOMANCER

HIGH-RISK TRAVEL (CHICAGO)

Gloria is an oddity, an open technomancer who communes peacefully with her Ares Venture while dropping tourists into the z-zone in the middle of Bug City. More interested in pulling high-g maneuvers than in keeping her passengers comfortable, she sits in a meditative pose in the middle of the cockpit, at one with the machine around her, a peaceful eye of the storm as her heavily customized bird roars across the military zone.

Attacked many times by suspicious customers, Gloria has only once been injured by passengers. She flew her VTOL into a building to stop the attack, and has kept a jagged scar across her left cheek as a reminder to never trust the cargo.

Gloria can only be contacted over the Matrix, since she spends all of her unplugged time in a custom repair shop located somewhere in one of the Chicago suburbs.

FEMALE HUMAN

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	EDG	ESS	R
2	2	5	2	6	3	5	3	2	6	3

Initiative: 10 + 1D6
Matrix Initiative (Hot Sim): 8 + 4D6
Movement: 4/8/+2
Condition Monitor (P/S): 9/11
Limits: Physical 4, Mental 6, Social 6
Armor: 11
Qualities: Bad Reputation, Code of Honor, Gearhead, Social Stress
Submersion Grade: 2
Echoes: Mind Over Machine 2
Skills (Dice Pools): Cracking skill group 5, Electronics skill group 7, Pilot Aircraft 10, Pilot Ground Craft 8, Pistols 4, Biology (Bug Spirits) 5(7), Club Music 6, Engineering 7, Pilot (Professional) 7, Sprawl Life 5
Gear: Fake SIN 4, Low Lifestyle (2 months), mapsoft, Renraku Sensei (Device Rating 3), Urban Explorer jumpsuit with helmet, satellite link
Weapons:
Ares Light Fire 70 [Light Pistol, Acc 7, DV 6P, AP —, SA, RC —, 16(c), 38 additional regular rounds]
Vehicle: Ares Venture (Sensor 6, Rigger Interface, Standard Weapon Mount (Ares Alpha), Dalmation (Sensor 6, Ares Alpha, Rigger Interface)
Living Persona: Device Rating 3, Attack 3, Sleaze 5, Data Processing 3, Firewall 6
Contacts: Fixer (3/3), UCAS Guard Captain (2/2)
Nuyen: 10

PIPING HOT

A BORDER CROSSING ADVENTURE

Piping Hot is a *Shadowrun* one-shot mission that a gamemaster can drop it into an ongoing campaign, or use it to introduce new players to the game. **Piping Hot** follows a similar format to the Shadowrun Missions available at shadowruntabletop.com/missions. This module does not contain pre-generated characters for use by the players; suitable templates are available in the *Shadowrun, Fifth Edition* rulebook.

ADVENTURE STRUCTURE

Piping Hot consists of several scenes; these scenes form the basis of the adventure. Each scene outlines the most likely sequence of events as well as how to handle some unexpected twists and turns that might crop up. They contain the following sections: Scan This (a summary of the scene), Tell It to Them Straight (a section to read aloud to players), Behind the Scenes (the full details the gamemaster needs to know to run the scene), Pushing the Envelope (options for making the scene more challenging or throwing new twists into the plot), Debugging (suggestions for what to do if the scene seems to be going of the rails).

MISSION SYNOPSIS

The runners are contacted by a fixer who is in a real jam; he needs someone smuggled into Seattle from Salish-Shidhe territory. Normally the fixer has a Coyote he can call on for this purpose, but his Coyote hasn't been answering calls for the last twenty-four hours, and something may have happened to him. All is not lost, as the Coyote left a sealed set of instructions on his route in case someone needs to come get him out of trouble. Now all he needs is some resourceful runners to take the notes and a van, pick up someone in Salish-Shidhe, and follow the instructions back to Seattle. If they run into the Coyote on the way and can help him, then even better.

The journey to Salish-Shidhe has only one hiccup, a standard border crossing, which will prove difficult only if the characters do not have adequate SINs to get them through. The way back is much harder and involves driving through mountains, watching a spirit hunt, a drone encounter, and finally either a drive through agricultural runoff pipes or an encounter with some of Seattle's finest Metroplex guardsmen.

CALLED FOR DUTY

SCAN THIS

The runners are called by a fixer in a fix and offered an unusual job. Meeting the fixer reveals that he needs the runners to be Coyotes for a day to get someone into the city.

TELL IT TO THEM STRAIGHT

A harsh buzzing snaps you awake, your link is lit up with an incoming call from a Mr. Telenov. Hitting the "Audio only" button, you lurch up out of bed and stare out the window. There is a red-orange tinge to the dark sky; it's not even dawn yet.

"Hey buddy, did I wake you? Look, I've got an urgent job that needs someone with your special skills. If you can make it down to Hagar's House of Waffles in an hour, I'll buy you breakfast and explain the deal. It's well worth the inconvenience of an early start, and we'll beat the breakfast rush. Look, I've got to call some others, just come on down and I'll explain it all. See you soon!"

With that Mr. Telenov drops the connection, and you are left looking out the window at a city that is just beginning to wake up.

BEHIND THE SCENES

When the runners arrive at the Waffle house, Mr. Telenov is sitting at a back table. Since he has contacted the runners separately he is expecting them to arrive one by one. As each runner walks in the door he waves them toward the table, having pushed together enough tables to accommodate all the runners that he contacted. Soon after the runners arrive, a waitress walks from the counter to the table with a stack of waffles. Mr. Telenov has slipped her a little extra so that she won't bother them while they are talking business.

After it becomes clear that everyone who is coming has arrived, Mr. Telenov quickly gets to the point, explaining: "Thanks for coming. There were one or two others that I thought might come, but I guess they aren't interested. I've got a job for the group of you that I think will suit your individual strengths. In short, there is a person outside Seattle that I need to get into the city by midday tomorrow. I need you to go collect this person and smuggle them across the border. There isn't much else I can tell you about the job right now, but there is a good payout if you can pull it off. We need more coffee; I'll get that arranged while you guys talk it over." With that he wanders slowly up to the counter and starts talking to the waitress.

Telenov is transparently giving the runners a chance to introduce themselves and discuss whether they would like to continue on. He'll glance back at the table every now and then, and when the runners look like they have finished talking he'll bring a couple of big pots of black coffee back to the table.

If any or all of the runners refuse he will thank them for their time, and mention they can take a doggie bag of waffles from the buffet on their way out.

Runners who want more information have to agree that Telenov is going to be giving them privileged information and that they won't spread it around.

"In short the offer is that I will provide you with a vehicle and instructions on how to get into the city without

a border check, and you'll go off and do it. At the end of the mission you can keep the vehicle, or if you prefer I can sell it on your behalf and divide up the profits. Are you in?"

Any runners who would like to negotiate are welcome to do so, Mr. Telenov has a Charisma of 5 and a Negotiation (Bargaining) of 8 (10) for a total dice pool of 15, his social limit is 5. For each net success the runners get, he is willing to throw in a cash bonus of 500 nuyen per runner, up to a limit of 3,000 nuyen, he's willing to put half up front as well.

WHEN THE RUNNERS ACCEPT, HE GOES INTO MORE DETAIL:

"So you may be wondering why I'm asking a bunch of shadowrunners to do a job a Coyote normally does. I do have a Coyote on this route, but the trouble is that he disappeared last night. He is a really good friend of mine, and left his notes on how to get into the city with me, as well as the codes to his van. I think he might have disappeared along the route that you guys will be taking. If you see him on your journey and manage to rescue him I'll give you a bonus of a thousand nuyen each. Before you ask, yes it is his van that I'll be rewarding you with. If he comes back he'll be pissed, but I'll buy him a new van.

Your pickup is a gentleman who will answer to the name Takashi, who will be waiting for Mr. Wright in a bar in Wenatchee. I have a picture here, but I understand he's undergone some surgery since this picture was taken. Here is a data file with the instructions for smuggling people across the border, I'm also transmitting the code needed to unlock the van, which is parked around the back of the waffle house. Is there anything else you guys need?"

The characters will likely ask Mr. Telenov about the client and the route, but he has provided all the information that he has. The client, Takashi, is willing.

LEGWORK

The Client: If characters start to dig through the Matrix feeds in Wenatchee they will, with a successful Computer + Intuition [Data Processing] (3) Test, find a feed of what looks like a slender Japanese human male in a wheelchair who seems to have arrived yesterday, and spent most of his time in a bar that looks like it used to be a school gymnasium. There is no Matrix connection or mailbox for contacting the gentleman ahead of time, although it might be possible to bribe one of the townsfolk to take a message to him.

The Route: A successful Computer + Analyze (3) [Logic] Test will match up large sections of the proposed route in the data file to roads into and out of Salish-Shidhe. The noticeable parts don't match seem to sit near Seattle, where the directions appear to go underground, as well as near the Salish-Shidhe border crossing, where the route doesn't seem to match the roads. The driving time is about 4 hours plus stops each way according to the notes.

The Coyote: With the van, it is easy to identify the Coyote as one "Running Dan" a Coyote with a reasonably good rep. Last seen last night driving off on a motorcycle. Checking with Knight Errant or DocWagon Contacts will reveal that Dan had a Docwagon Gold account, but that his signal hasn't been detected since around midnight. Knight Errant have not seen him, and there are no warrants for his arrest.

Mr. Telenov: Checking with Johnson Contacts, other Runners, fixers, or information brokers will suggest that Mr. Telenov is a recent fixer who has yet to break into the upper rungs, but one who hasn't screwed anyone yet, or if he has, he has covered his tracks well.

DEBUGGING

The only thing likely to go wrong in this scene is if the runners decide not to take up the offer of Mr. Telenov. If that is the case, then Mr. Telenov will bid the runners farewell, and start calling around for help.

In the unlikely case that the characters attack Mr. Telenov, they will likely kill him. He's a fixer, not a shadowrunner, and his armored vest and heavy pistol is not likely to keep him alive against a determined attack by runners. Threatening Mr. Telenov will reveal to him that he's made a big mistake giving the characters work; he will give in to demands, happily making big promises in order to get the characters off his back. He will also send a coded message to a friend who will put a bounty on the characters heads, emailing photos, names and contact numbers to the Mafia, the Tongs, several gang leaders and a couple of bounty hunters. Mr. Telenov has enough financial reserves to pay out 10,000 nuyen per confirmed death in the runners group. This message will also go out if Mr. Telenov is killed.

GET OUTTA TOWN

SCAN THIS

The runners have a van, a plan, and a deadline they need to meet. The first hurdle is getting out of town and past the UCAS-Salish-Shidhe border. There are several methods to get to Salish-Shidhe, including air-freighting the runners and the van across the border, getting smuggled out in a boat and going cross country, but the easiest is simply taking the newly-acquired van and driving it out of town, through the border check.

Note that the directions left by the Coyote are in the form of "Take the first right and the second left" which makes it impossible to work out where the tunnels come up in Seattle, although it should be simple to find the entrance in Salish-Shidhe.

TELL IT TO THEM STRAIGHT

You're finally on the road; the morning sun peeking through the mountains to the East, while behind you the sky is dark with storm clouds. Driving along the freeway,

your van settles into a queue of traffic, eventually slowing to a stop as various cars and trucks pass through the border. As you drive up, you get approached by two members of the Metroplex guard, along with a Rotordrone. One of them motions for you to open your window, and brings out a scanner.

"Good day citizens. Please ensure that every traveller is broadcasting their SIN, and fills out the appropriate customs form" Checking your commlink, you have been invited to log onto the border host where there is a software agent ready to transmit and process the visa forms and passports.

BEHIND THE SCENES

Getting past a border, even one between friendly nations such as the UCAS and Salish-Shidhe is never trivial, however the direct land route to Salish-Shidhe is one of the less demanding borders. Tourists are rare by land, most will spring to travel by air, the land border mostly sees road trains and other heavy cargo vehicles. Travelling to Salish-Shidhe requires a tourist visa, work visa, or a cargo-moving visa.

The border check has several steps. First, if any passengers are detected who are not publicly broadcasting their SIN; the vehicle will be diverted to a thorough manual check. While failing to broadcast a SIN is not legally forbiden, it is viewed with suspicion. As the vehicle must pass through a millimeter-band radar scanner when it enters the check area, each vehicle is thoroughly examined for hidden compartments and stowaways. Drug-sniffer drones will also pass by each vehicle as it is being processed. Every border check also has at least one duty mage with two or three high-Force spirits in attendance. These astral guards will assense each runner to check for undeclared magical ability and any active high-Force foci or fetishes. As may be expected, the mages assigned to border patrol are not the brightest , and low force active foci may well slip past, as may any mages with the Masking metamagic. See the entry on p. 15 for a "Normal" border for further details.

A tourist visa to Salish-Shidhe is easy to attain, the forms can be filled out online and if an automated SIN check comes up without any violent criminal convictions the visa is usually granted. The process is normally automated, although there are Salish-Shidhe deckers watching over the process and a certain number of applications are manually monitored. Work and cargo visas are also easy to obtain, all they require is a SIN check and for a legal, recognized corporation that has been registered in Salish-Shidhe to agree that you must travel to or through the country for work purposes. All these visas also require that any weapons are registered and have a permit in Salish-Shidhe.

For runners, or other criminals, these qualifications should be reasonably easy to attain, some deckers specialize in digitally forging credentials, and a good fixer can put runners in touch with such a resource.

A human border guard will physically talk to each runner in the vehicle, asking them to exit the vehicle if it is too difficult to converse with each. Sleeping or injured characters will be woken if it is safe to do so. If the passengers claim that it is not safe, the guard will become suspicious and call in the duty mage to make a thorough examination of the vehicle and occupants, as well as calling over sniffer drones.

In addition to the normal precautions listed under the "Normal" border entry, this border is enforced on the Salish-Shidhe side by a selection of drones with a spider in the command seat.

SCAN THIS

The runners arrive in the town of Wenatchee in Salish-Shidhe, where they are easily able to find their target, who will come willingly. Unfortunately for the runners, they are not the only ones who are in town and interested in Mr. Takashi. The arrival of the runners will tell the corporate security who have been monitoring him that he is about to depart, at which point they will abandon their information gathering mission and attempt to capture Takashi, and collect at least one runner alive for interrogation.

TELL IT TO THEM STRAIGHT

The sun sets early in the heights of Salish-Shidhe and here you are, outside a small town, surrounded by mighty wooded mountains and breathing in the crisp, clean mountain air. Just being here gives you the shivers. You can't wait to get back to the city.

Rolling into the outskirts of the small town is an education in what megacorporations can do to a small agricultural town. As your commlink beeps to tell you that you have entered the city limits you see a blackened and dead grove of apple trees, obviously killed by acid rain. Passing by suburbs you see many empty and decaying houses and businesses. Here and there through the town are clusters of stores and houses that are open and serving the public, but they are islands in a dreary landscape. There are plenty of alcohol shops, but not many bars that you can see. Eventually, near the middle of town you spy a likely bar, "The Golden Apple," which looks like it has been set up in an old school gymnasium. A couple of plastic chairs are set outside the bar, although the pooled water and leaves decorating them suggest that no one has used them for a long time.

As you near the bar you see patrons inside watching your vehicle through the big plate-glass window.

BEHIND THE SCENES

This bar is the one that the characters are after. Runners may want to case the joint or look up plans online. Searching for the plans will find the original building plans, and a few logical deductions will provide the characters with a map of the bar.

WENATCHEE

A former orchard town, Wenatchee has been hit hard by VITAS and environmental damage. The population has declined from a peak of about 35,000 to 15,000, even as unemployment has risen to 15 percent, and 25 percent among those under 25. Once a hub for the agricultural workers in the region, the town has found out the hard way that heavily automated agribusiness doesn't need a town for workers to congregate.

Tribal affiliation		Demographics	
Wenatchi	20%	Human	65%
Salish	12%	Ork	20%
Cascade Orks	4%	Elf	5%
Other	6%	Dwarf	4%
Non-Tribal	58%	Troll	2%
		Other	4%

The patrons of the bar are reasonably surly, but they haven't come here to fight, in fact the patrons try to ignore outsiders as much as they possibly can. Astral recon will pick up on feelings of despair from some patrons, and grim determination from others, but most of the two dozen patrons are just enjoying a drink with friends.

One patron stands out, sitting at the bar in a black trench coat and mirror shades is a distinctively Japanese man, anyone with skill in etiquette can see that he is standing out like a sore thumb. Despite being very out of place, Takashi isn't bothering the other patrons, nor is he bothered by them. In the background, a Mitsuhama strike team has been observing Takashi, ready to swoop in and collect their runaway experiment as well as the contact who led him away from the corporation. The strike team consists of four regular guards (use Police Patrol, p. 383, *SR5*), a hermetic mage (use Combat Mage, p. 116, *SR5*) with two force 4 spirits on call as well as a Street Samurai and a Gillette (use Street Samurai, p. 115, *SR5*). The guards are posted on nearby rooftops, organized to give two viewpoints of the front and rear of the building. Any runner deliberately attempting to look for snipers, or who is examining the rooftops from the street will detect up to two guards with an Intuition + Perception [Mental], (4) test, they will be able to find the other two if they check the buildings behind the bar. Any aerial observer such as rotodrones or levitating mages who are above rooftop level will automatically find the observers.

As one or more runners enters the bar, the observers will call in to the rest of the team, who will prepare to ambush the runners and Mr. Takashi when they exit the bar. The two nearest guards will also move into position to attack the van, if visible, or any other runners who do not enter the bar, attacking with their pistols as soon as the strike team moves.

The strike team uses standard ambush tactics, the street samurai will lay down suppressive fire, and the mage will engage from a distance while the spirits and the gillette mix it up in close combat. All of the team are fanatically loyal to the corporation, but can also recognize a hopeless situation when they see it, and if the team starts to go down, the last couple of team members will attempt to flee or surrender, if possible. If any of the runners has a notoriety score of two or more, the team will fight to the death, as they know that they will only be tortured and executed by the runners. In any case, the goal of the strike team is to capture Takashi, and not to damage him too much, Mitsuhama can always hire runners to capture him back from whoever steals him.

Once the strike team has been put down, the runners should be able to leave town with no further problems.

PUSHING THE ENVELOPE

If the characters will obviously need a challenge, then feel free to issue heavier ordinance to the guards, including grenades and medium machine guns, and bump the edge score of the augmented members of the team.

If the encounter is over too quickly, then a backup strike team could track down the characters on their way out of town and ambush them as they go past.

DEBUGGING

The worst thing that can happen in this scene is that Takashi could die, which is unlikely until grenades or fireballs start flying. In that case, the runners will probably want to contact Mr. Telenov, who will tell them to bring the body back, and the mission is still on. He will be evasive if asked whether the end-client will pay up, but he will assure the runners that they will still be paid, since he is the one who is paying them.

CASCADING ORKS

SCAN THIS

The runners have made their choice of transport and depart the town. On their way through the mountains they are stopped by some spirits who inform them that a hunt is in progress. Shortly after this, the hunt comes to the characters.

TELL IT TO THEM STRAIGHT

Finally on the road! Outside the windows the moonlit hills pass by silently. The only light around is the light from the commlinks inside the vehicle as each of you check messages, or just play games to pass the time.

Just as the gentle swaying of your seat is starting to make your eyelids droop there is a bright light ahead.

What looks like some sort of figure made of burning straw strides forward and raises its hand, in a voice which echoes through the hills it says something in Salish. After which it remains standing in the middle of the road with its arm outstretched. It's not attacking, but it's not moving out of the way either. In the flickering darkness around you, several other shapes are moving.

BEHIND THE SCENES

The phrase repeated by the spirit is "No one may pass, the sacred hunt must not be interfered with." In case anyone knows Salish, or can download a linguasoft from a satellite link. Everything on the outside of the vehicle is recorded as a matter of course by the van, so if the runners need it played back, and someone is smart enough to look through the van node, then it is easy to do.

There are three spirits: a spirit of fire (Force =5, optional power: Noxious Breath) a spirit of beast (Force = 4, Optional Power: Confusion) and a spirit of earth (Force = 4, Optional Power: Engulf)

If the characters sit tight, theoretically the spirits will disappear in 3 hours when the shaman who summoned them projects in astral and flies past to dismiss them. In practice the hunt is coming to where the spirits are, the spirits have about ten minutes before the hunt arrives.

The runners may attempt to drive around the spirits. The road is on the side of a mountain, but the van is pretty good off road, if the runners back the van up a few hundred meters, and swing in a large circle around the spirits, the spirits won't interfere as they have been ordered to stop anyone from going past, but have also been ordered to stay near the road. If the runners fail a Reflexes + Pilot (Wheeled)[Physical](3) test, the van will get stuck, requiring a combined strength of 14 to progress, but the spirits will merely watch from a distance.

If the runners are still at the checkpoint ten minutes after they have been stopped, the hunt will arrive. Of course if the runners push past the checkpoint, they will run into the hunt earlier, as the basilisks are using the road to navigate. The basilisks at this point just want to escape.

If the runners do not intervene, the basilisks will run past; each taking a swipe or two at the van as they go past, the two adepts will pursue, but will eventually fall behind the basilisks about half a kilometer along the road. The Astral Shaman will assense the van and anyone in it, but will not attack unless provoked.

Incidentally, as the original (Fire, Beast, Earth) Spirits have not been given any orders to engage in combat, they will sit and watch everything happen. They will defend themselves against anyone who attacks them, but otherwise will do their duty and simply watch and wait. After the fight with the Basilisks, the Shaman, assuming he's still conscious, will dismiss the spirits.

BASILISKS

(NUMBER OF BASILISKS = NUMBER OF RUNNERS + 2)

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS	M
6	3	3	7	5	1	3	1	6	4

Initiative: 6+1D6
Movement: 3/15/+1 (6/24/+2 swimming)
Condition Monitor (P/S): 11/11
Limits: Physical 8, Mental 4, Social 5
Armor: 7
Powers: Armor 7, Natural Weapon (bite, Reach —, DV 8P, AP –2), Petrification
Skills (Dice Pools): Infiltrating 6, Perception 7, Running 9, Sneaking 6, Swimming 15, Unarmed Combat 9
Weaknesses: Vulnerability (Own gaze)

ADEPTS

HUMAN

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	EDG	ESS	M
5	5	5 (6)	5	3	3	3	3	1	6	4

Initiative: 8(9) + 1(2)d6
Movement: 10/20/+2
Condition Monitor (P/S): 11/10
Limits: Physical 7, Mental 4, Social 5
Armor: 9
Skills (Dice Pools): Archery 9, Athletics skill group 9, Blades 9, Clubs 9, Computer 4, Con 4, Disguise 4, Escape Artist 7, First Aid 4, Intimidation 7, Lockpicking 8, Negotiation 4, Outdoors skill group 6, Perception 6, Sneaking 8, Throwing Weapons 8, Unarmed Combat 12, Knowledge: Kung Fu 7
Qualities: Bilingual, Code of Honor, Double Jointed, Natural Athlete, Pain Resistance 1
Adept Powers: Critical Strike (Unarmed Combat), Improved Ability (Unarmed Combat), Improved Relfexes 2, Improved Senses (Low-light vision), Killing Hands, Light Body
Gear: Climbing gear, Armor vest, Flashlight
Weapons:

Bow [Bow, Acc 6, DV 7P, AP –2, 10arrows]
Club [Clubs, Reach 1, Acc 4, DV 8P, AP –1]
Extendable Baton [Clubs, Acc 5, Reach 1, DV 7P, AP -]
Knife [Blades, Acc 5, Reach —, DV 6P, AP –1, 2 knives]
Survival Knife [Baldes, Acc 5, Reach -, DV 7P, AP –1]
Throwing Knife [Throwing weapon, Acc 5, DV 6P, AP –1, 2 knives]

MAGE

ELF

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	EDG	ESS	M
4	4	4	5	4	4	4	4	1	6	3

Initiative: 8 + 1D6
Astral Initiative: 8+3D6
Movement: 8/16/+2
Condition Monitor (P/S): 10/10
Limits: Physical 6, Mental 6, Social 7
Armor: 9
Skills (Dice Pools): Alchemy 8, Animal Handling 6, Assensing 7, Athletics

skill group 6, Banishing 5, Blades 7, Conjuring 9, Disguise 5, Etiquette 6, First Aid 8, Intimidation 6, Medicine 8, navigation 5, Negotiation 6, Perception 5, Performance 6, Sneaking 5, Sorcery Skill Group 7, Politics 6, Salish-Shidhe 7, Sprawl Life 7, Tarislar 8, Tir Tainquire 6
Qualities: Bilinqual, Gremlins 2, Mentor Spirit (Bear), Spirit Affinity (Beast Spirits), Prejudice (mild, hermetic magicians), Simsense vertigo
Gear: Armor vest
Spells: Antidote, Cure Disease, Entertainment, Heal, Mana bolt

PUSHING THE ENVELOPE

Should the runners need more of a challenge, the basilisks might choose to make a stand from behind the runners van. The Astral mage can call in significant spiritual help also, in the form of force 4 Fire Spirits.

DEBUGGING

The worst that can happen in this scene is that either the spirits or the hunt will kill or disable the group; this is a risk any time runners get into combat. If the van is trashed then the runners will need to walk back to Seattle, definitely missing their deadline, and with no pay or van to show for their troubles.

THROUGH THE PIPES

SCAN THIS

The runners are nearing the Metroplex border, and need to get their target back across the border. Takashi can't get past the border security; he's too radioactive, and has no passport, so the runners need to find another way in. The Coyote's files are an obvious place to start, as they have a detailed path past the border. The path takes the runners through agricultural runoff tunnels into the sewers under Seattle, where they meet a group of sentient ghouls in need of clothing to travel on the surface.

TELL IT TO THEM STRAIGHT

The gentle rocking of the van as it follows the winding road is surprisingly relaxing, almost meditative. It comes as a surprise when you see the well-lit border crossing a couple of miles. Ahead, the only sign of civilization for miles, it looks very different from this side.

Takashi turns in his seat and says "You know I will never make it past that border check right? What's the plan to get me into Seattle?"

BEHIND THE SCENES

Takashi is telling the truth; his internal power source is a low-yield reactor. Not particularly dangerous, but hot enough to bleed through the walls of the armored van and set off the radiation detectors at the checkpoint. Without a big lead box to hide Takashi, making it through the checkpoint is going to be very difficult. Takashi is more than happy to share general details about his cyborg body that might help the runners get him into Seattle, although of course he won't go into enough detail to count as paydata.

The fact that Takashi can't get through the checkpoint may remind the runners of the plan the original Coyote had to get past the border. It is easy to follow the map off road, to a large concrete outflow pipe. The pipe is big enough to fit the van easily, although it will take a little time to get into position. After that point the plan just consists of a list of "turn left after the sewer outfall" type instructions.

Assuming the runners follow the instructions left to them by the Coyote, they find themselves in a large runoff pipe. Ten kilometers later there is a hole cut into the side of the runoff pipe big enough for a van to enter, at which point the runners find themselves on the very edge of the large and complicated sewer network of the Seattle Metroplex.

The outer edge of the sewer network is a good place to hide, and unfortunately a group of ghouls, some of whom are sentient, are well aware of this fact. All of these ghouls were human, and none of them are Awakened.

Shortly after the runners enter the sewers, they come to a tunnel that has recently been barricaded with shopping carts and chunks of concrete from the wall. This is an ambush point for a group of ghouls looking for clothing and a vehicle so that they can get to the surface. Unfortunately the group has not planned well, and they don't have much of a battle plan other than "jump out and get them."

The ghouls attempt to ambush the van. As the van is not armed to attack the ghouls directly, the runners need to open the door to get shots off. Note the ghouls will take a long time to scratch their way into the van. The barrier will take a Pilot (Ground Craft) + Reaction [Physical] (4) Test to push past. Moving the barrier by hand will take one runner five Combat Turns to clear a path big enough for the van; more runners will reduce the time accordingly. Backing up and finding an alternate route would be a Navigation + Intuition [Mental] (5) Test.

In the meantime anyone who has the ghouls in their range of vision can make a Perception + Intuition [Mental] (3) Test to notice a relatively well-dressed ghoul who looks a lot like the Coyote that the runners have a picture of, the Coyote who originally owned the van. While the other ghouls are approaching the van in order to claw at the paintwork, the ghoul formerly known as Running Dan rushes up to the van and runs his fingers across its body, trying to remember his former life. Where the other ghouls attack in a barely conscious fashion, Running Dan mostly stands around. He doesn't attack unless first fired on. If anyone, including a ghoul, seriously damages the van—Dan attacks that combatant until he is dragged off or kills them.

GHOUL

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	EDG	ESS	M
7	3	5	6	5	2	4	1	3	5	1

Initiative: 9 + 1D6
Movement: 6/12/+2

Condition Monitor (P/S): 12/11
Limits: Physical 8, Mental 5, Social 4
Armor: 1
Skills (Dice Pools): Assensing 8, Perception 9, Running 9, Sneaking 9, Unarmed Combat 9
Powers: Armor 1, Dual-natured, Enhanced Senses (Hearing, Smell), Natural Weapon, Sapience
Weapons:
Claw [Acc Physical, DV 7P, AP –1]
Weaknesses: Allergy (Sunlight, Moderate), Dietary Requirement (Metahuman Flesh), Reduced Senses (Blind)

Once the runners have resolved the situation with the ghouls, the directions they have eventually bring them to the fringes of the Ork Underground. From there, they should able to find their way up to the surface easily. At that point, it will come as a relief to get into the rain-soaked, crowded neon streets of Seattle. The meet to deliver Takashi is mere moments away.

PUSHING THE ENVELOPE

If the runners eliminate the ghouls immediately and the combat doesn't feel satisfying, the two masterminds of the ambush (a pair of sentient ghouls) will shoot from down the corridor at the van with some old AK-97s and a couple of grenades. With good cover and poor lighting, they may prove a lot more difficult to eliminate.

DEBUGGING

One of the ways this scene can go off the rails is if the runners find a different and clever way to get past the border that doesn't involve taking the Coyote Tunnels. Don't short circuit their creativity—if they find another way around that works, you can let them take it. The ghoul ambush can be dropped into a variety of locations as needed.

PICKING UP THE PIECES

SCAN THIS

The runners have made it back into town, all they need to do is drop off their precious cargo, get paid, and decide what to do with the van.

TELL IT TO THEM STRAIGHT

Finally out of the tunnels and into the city. Checking the GridGuide, which has just come back online, you are pretty close to the waffle house where you originally met Mr. Telenov.

BEHIND THE SCENES

Nothing too exciting. When the runners call, Mr. Telenov suggests they meet out the back of the waffle house, since it's a landmark that everyone knows. On the safe delivery of Takashi, or his body, Mr. Telenov signs over the van to someone in the group, or takes it and sells it for cash, although the runners will probably prefer to do this for themselves.

If the runners made it back before midnight, Mr. Telenov gives them a bonus of 1,000 nuyen in addition to whatever they agreed on. He won't offer this bonus if Takashi is dead.

If the runners killed Running Dan and have documentary evidence (probably from the van cameras), Mr. Telenov adds another 500 nuyen to the bonus, on the principle that closure is good for the soul.

If the runners managed to capture and bring back Running Dan, Mr. Telenov will not only give the runners a bonus of 2,000 nuyen each, as well as reimburse any expenses the runners may have had, he will also have the van repaired on his own dime as well. By doing so Mr. Telenov is wiping out his commission for the job, but he is very happy to have his friend back, even if his friend now has to eat metahuman flesh.

DEBUGGING

There isn't much which can go wrong at this point. If the runners attempt to extort a higher payment from Mr. Telenov, perhaps by refusing to hand over Takashi or Running Dan, they could get an extra 2,000 nuyen each from him, at the cost of a point of Notoriety and the loss of two points of Street Cred.

Runners who complain that they didn't have all the information about Takashi before they left will just get a shrug from Telnov as he says, "I didn't know either."